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श्रीराम

Life and Times of Shivaji II

(CHATRAPATI SHAHU)

1680—1749 A. D.

BY

MUNTAZIM BAHADUR

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ASSISTED BY

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ADVOCATE, HIGH COURT, BOMBAY.

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DEDICATED

To the revered memory of
Devi Shri Ahalyabai Holkar,
and
Parwatibai Burway
My Venerable Mother

M. W. BURWAY
The author

FOREWORD

BY

Lieut-Colonel L. E. Lang, C. I. E., M. C., Resident at Kolhapur and Political Agent, Southern Mahratta Country States.

Muntazim Bahadur Mukund Wamanrao Burway B.A. has asked me to write a foreword to his "Life and Times of Shivaji II." Being a keen student of Mahratta history and a great admirer of the founder of the Mahratta Empire, I feel grateful to Mr. Burway for asking me to associate my name with an account of the life of the grandson of the famous Shivaji and with a period of Mahratta history which saw the division of the house of Shivaji into the two houses of Satara and Kolhapur.

I have read with considerable interest the manuscript of the new book and I consider it shows a careful study and sound knowledge of the author's subject.

The author has devoted himself to a life-long study of the history of the Mahrattas. By adding the life of Shivaji II to his Series he will earn the gratitude of the public and I feel sure that those who have not read his previous volumes will, after reading the present Life, proceed to do so.

Shivaji I, the founder of the Mahratta Empire, had two sons Sambhaji and Rajaram. On the death of Shivaji in 1680, his eldest son Sambhaji succeeded him and after leading a life of riotous living was murdered by the Moghuls under Aurangzeb in 1689. Sambhaji's son Shahu was taken into captivity by Aurangzeb and this left Shivaji's second son Rajaram the de facto Raja of the Mahrattas. Rajaram was unable to meet the onslaughts of the Moghul Emperor and met his death in 1700 at the fort of Sinhgad near Poona, a month before Satara fell into the hands of Aurangzeb.

On the death of Rajaram his widow Tarabai, the mother of Shivaji II, aided by the Pant Amatya, the Senapati and the Pantpratinidhi assumed the administra-

sion on behalf of her son, then aged ten years. She imprisoned her husband's younger widow Rajasbai with the latter's son Sambhaji, a child of three years of age. Between 1700 and the death of Aurangzeb in 1707, the Mahratta arms met with considerable success and the Moghul power in the Kolhapur part of the Maharashtra became annihilated.

Shortly after the Emperor's departure for Ahmednagar, the Pant Amatya captured the fort of Panhala and Tarabai made it the capital of the kingdom.

After the death of Aurangzeb his successor, in order to cause dissent amongst the Mahrattas and thus weaken the hands of Tarabai and her generals, released Shahu the son of Sambhaji and encouraged him to claim the chiefship of the Mahrattas.

Shahu aided by the Emperor defeated Tarabai's forces in 1708 and obtained possession of Satara which he made the capital of his kingdom. During the next year he captured the great forts of Panhala and Vishalghad forcing Tarabai to fly into the Konkan.

On Shahu's withdrawal from Panhala, Tarabai recovered the fort but her hopes and prospects were shattered by the death of her son Shivaji in 1702. After Shivaji's death Tarabai and her son's widow Bhavanibai were imprisoned and Sambhaji, the second son of Rajaram, was placed on the Kolhapur Gadi.

The division of the house of Shivaji into the house of Satara under the rule of Shahu, the son of Sambhaji and the house of Kolhapur under the rule of Sambhaji, the son of Rajaram, dates from 1712. At the time both Mahratta rulers were at war and dissensions between them were actively fomented by Chinkulikhan, the first Nizam whose desire it was to weaken the Mahratta power. The Nizam supported the Kolhapur branch and the Satara branch was assisted by the genius of the great Peshwa Balaji Vishwanath and favoured by the Moghul Emperor. In 1727 a crisis resulted through the Nizam in the course of arbitrating a dispute between Shahu and Sambhaji sequestering some of the former's territory. This resulted in the Shahu and the Peshwa concentrating their whole force

against the Nizam which led the latter to desert Sambhaji. Left alone, Sambhaji was utterly defeated when marching against Satara and in 1730 was obliged to conclude a treaty limiting the Kolhapur territory to the tract between the rivers Varna and Krishna.

As a result of Sambhaji's defeat Tarabai the mother and Bhawanibai the widow of Shivaji II were taken prisoners and confined in the fort of Satara.

At this juncture a discovery was made that Bhawanibai the widow of Shivaji II had been pregnant at the time of Shivaji's death and that later a son Rajaram had been born and concealed in the Konkan by Tarabai. While Shahu lay on his death-bed in 1749 the Peshwa obtained a secret interview with him and persuaded him to sign a deed empowering the Peshwa to govern the whole Mahratta Empire on condition that the dignity of the house of Shivaji would be maintained by the recognition of Rajaram the grandson of Tarabai.

Here we take leave of Mr. Burway and wish him every success in his admirable labours in the field of Mahratta history.

Sd/ L. E. LANG, Lient-Colonel,
Resident at Kolhapur.

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PREFACE

By the grace of Shree Rama, I have been enabled to publish my new historical work, entitled "Life and Times of Shivaji II," 1680-1749 A. D., in spite of the drawbacks of bad health and financial pressure. Chhatrapati Shivaji II, commonly known as Shahu, had a career at once complicated and tangled and full of discordant elements from which an escape seemed almost impossible. Brought up in the Moghul Zanana under the fostering care of Zebut-un-nisa, daughter of Aurangzeb, Shahu had pro-Moghul propensities and deep attachment to the Moghul throne. Fate brought him to the Deccan, where the legacy left by the illustrious Shivaji—that of the Hindupat Padshai—had to be dealt with by such a king. But Shahu's good luck prevailed, as he was backed up by the genius of the Peshwa Balaji Vishwanath and the irresistible valour and statesmanship of Baji Rao. Hence Shahu was able to undertake the Herculean task of founding the Hindupat Padshai despite his pro-Moghul tendency and the most difficult and discordant forces surrounding this Maratha King.

I rejoice that the historical "Series" undertaken by me has been completed and warmly received by eminent Indian and English scholars. Heavy Court work and financial pressure had to be faced during all the years that occupied me in the completion of this "Series". But the generous support

of the Indore, Gwalior and Baroda Durbars greatly facilitated my undertaking and enabled me to complete it.*

I feel delighted to find that I have fulfilled the pious wishes of my revered father, the late Rao Bahadur Wamanrao Tatya Burway, (formerly Sir Subha of Malwa at Ujjain) whose interest in the Vedant Philosophy and Maratha History was unbounded and who ever encouraged me to devote my energy and labours to these two subjects. I gratefully remember the valuable suggestions of my revered father and of Lokmanya Tilak.†

I have, more than once, explained the reasons of writing my philosophical and historical works in a foreign language. Again I say that my aim in publishing my works in English is that the said works may be read not only in all parts of India but in other countries also and that the wrong views of

*Young India complains that Indian Princes are extraordinarily lavish in their donations to and appreciation of European authors, while Indian authors are not so liberally treated by the Indian Princes. This is a rather very unpleasant subject and a detailed discussion of it in this work may be considered irrelevant. One cannot, however, ignore it altogether.

† Lokmanya Tilak's fame as an illustrious scholar and helper of scholarship is too well-known to require a detailed mention here. I heartily acknowledge his cordial encouragement and help to me, when I was a young man and stood in need of guidance and advice. I gratefully remember all the help I received from the Lokmanya as well as from the late Mr. A. M. T. Jackson, M.A., I.C.S., the devoted scholar and from the late Dr. Mackichan, whose recent death has removed a charming and benevolent personality well-known to Maharashtra and Maratha historical writers.

writers like Mr. H. G. Keene, M.A., I.C.S., C.I.E., Sir James Campbell and others may be exposed in the light of modern researches to the public at large. Eminent scholars like the Hon'ble Mr. Justice C. A. Kincaid, Dr. Sen, Mr. N. C. Kelkar, Dr. Ganganath Jha and others have supported my views on important points and periods of Maratha History.* "You are indeed indefatigable in your labours in the cause of History" so says the Hon. Mr. H. G. Haig, C.S.I., C.I.E., I.C.S.

*I have much pleasure in presenting to my readers the views of my old and esteemed class-fellow Dr. Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, M.A., LL.D., K.C.S.I., and of Sir P. S. Shivaswami Iyer, K.C.S.I., C.I.E., regarding my latest historical works :—

(a)

19, Albert Road,
Allahabad.

13th March 1932.

My dear Burway,

I am greatly obliged to you for your letter of the 7th inst. and for your two books, 'Shivaji II' and 'Malhar Rao Holkar.' No one has used his retirement to greater service of the country than you have. I admire your devotion to scholarship and literature and wish you every happiness.

With kindest regards,

Yours very sincerely,

(Sd.) T. B. SAPRU.

(b) Sir Shivaswami Aiyer, in his letter to H. E. Rao Bahadur V. T. Krishnamachari, B.A., B.L., C.I.E., the Dewan Sahib of Baroda State, writes as follows :—

(Camp) Indore,

6th March 1932.

Dear Dewan Sahib,

I have much pleasure in introducing to you my old and esteemed friend, Mr. M. W. Burway, a retired District Judge

I would be doing less than justice to myself if I do not cursorily mention in this work the sufferings to which I was exposed during the period of the completion of this "Series". But with the help of the Almighty, I was able to surmount these difficulties almost in a miraculous manner. It would be out of place to indulge in details on this point but my readers must know at least a little about this matter and the difficulties of an Indian author.

I have availed myself of the up-to-date historical researches of Indian scholars like Rajwade, Khare, Parasnis and others. I also have made extended trips in Maharashtra, Rajputana, Bundelkhand and other parts of India with the aim of obtaining old papers, stories and other materials relevant to the

of the Indore State. He belongs to the small class of people who are inclined to take an interest in historical research. It is all the more creditable to him that he has been able to pursue his researches in the midst of his official labours. He has devoted himself to a study of the Maratha period of Indian History and the lives of the great Maratha princes and leaders. He has delved deep into the old Maratha records and has brought out several works which bear marks of his learning and research. His books are very well-written and attractive and have elicited encomiums from competent critics. He is also a Sanskrit scholar and has published the results of his studies in philosophy and religion. His ardour for historical work and his historical studies deserve appreciation and encouragement.

Yours sincerely,
(Sd.) P. S. SIVASWAMY AIYER.

subject in hand. I cordially thank my old and esteemed friend Shrimant Balasaheb Pant Pratinidhi B.A., the talented Chief of Aundh State for his help and advice.* His Highness the Maharao Umed Singh Bahadur, G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E., G.B.E., Ruler of the Kotah State, gave very much help to my historical pursuits and I heartily acknowledge it with thanks.

Before finishing this Preface, I wish to tender my thanks to all who have helped me. My thanks are especially due to the Hon'ble Mr. E. H. P. Jolly, I.C.S., Rai Bahadur S. M. Bapna, Sardar Kibe and Messrs. Pafarait and Arathoon. My nephew, Mr. A. G. Burway and my grandson Mr. Wasudeo Govind Burway, B.Sc., gave me much help during the publication of this work and deserve to be thanked. For his kindness and courtesy, Mr. M. N. Kulkarni, of the Karnatak Printing Press, deserves to be gratefully mentioned. May God bless India and England.

15th June 1932,
INDORE CITY.

M. W. BURWAY.

*I pray God that the Ruling Princes of India may be inclined to follow in the footsteps of the talented and learned Chief Sahib of Aundh State. I would be failing in my duty, if I did not gratefully mention the names of the Hon'ble Sir Reginald Glancy, K.C.I.E., C.S.I., and the Hon'ble Sir Leonard Reynolds, K.C.S.I., C.I.E. Sir Reginald Glancy spoke highly about me to H. H. Maharaja Holkar at the Banquet on the 13th March 1932 in the Lalbag Palace, Indore. I also acknowledge with thanks the kind help always given to me by the Hon. Mr. H. G. Haig, C.S.I., C.I.E., I.C.S.

Life of Chhatrapati Shahu

INTRODUCTION

A BRIEF HISTORICAL SURVEY 1627-1707

The illustrious Shivaji, the Defender of the Hindu religion and the inspired leader of the Maratha nation, was born on the 10th April 1627 in the Fort of Shivneri. His father's name was Shahaji Bhonsle* and mother's name Jijabai. The pious Jijabai named her son after the Goddess Shivabai (in the Shivneri Fort) in accordance with her vow, if a son was born to her. Shivaji had an elder brother named Sambhaji who fell in the siege of Kanakgiri fort in 1653 and a step-brother Vyankoji, the offspring of a second wife of Shahaji named Tukabai of the Mohite Family.

* The Bhonsle family is a branch of the Udalpur Dynasty which migrated to the Deccan under adverse circumstances and won distinctions with Jagheers and the title of Rajah under the Vijapur Kingdom. The founder of the Bhonsle family was Babjee Bhonsle (Bhosajee as mentioned by Malleison). Babjee had two sons, Malojee and Vithojee and resided at Verul, near Daulatabad. Malojee was born in 1550 A. D. and was married to Dipabai, sister of Jagpalrao Naik Nimbalkar. He had two sons named Shahajee and Shariffji. Shahajee, born in 1594 A. D., was married to Jijabai, daughter of Lakhujee Jadhav of Shindhkha. Malojee obtained Poona and Supa districts in Jagheer together with the Fort of Shivneri and Chakan for meritorious services rendered under the Nijamshahi Kingdom of Ahmadnagar. He died in 1619 A. D. His son Shahajee also won great distinction.

After the fall of the Nijamshahi kingdom of Ahmadnagar in 1633 A. D., Shahaji who had used his best efforts to avert that calamity, entered the service of the Adilshahi king of Bijapur under the auspices of Diwan Moropant who had much influence with the Bijapur Ruler. While earning fresh laurels in the new fields before him, he took care that his son Shivaji should receive as good an education as was suited to the spirit of the age. In Dadojee Kond Dev, the manager of Shahajee's Jagheers in the Poona and the Supa districts, he found an excellent tutor for his illustrious son, the future founder of the Maratha Empire* and the heroic leader of the Maratha nation. Under Dadoji Kond Dev's training Shivaji imbibed a spirit for adventure and a deep faith in the Hindu

* On April 10, 1627 A. D. after an interval of four years, she (Jijabai) bore Shahaji a second son. Several stories are told in support of the general belief that the baby boy was an incarnation of the God Shiv. A charming one is to be found in the Shadgaonkar Bakhar. One night Shahajee dreamt that he saw a Gosavi or Hindu anchorite, clad in rags and smeared with yellow ashes stand by his bed side and put a mango in his hand. "Share the fruit with your wife," said the anchorite, "and you will become the father of a son who will be an incarnation of the God Shiv. You must never force him to salute a Musalman and after his twelfth year you must leave him free to act as he pleases." When Shahajee awoke he found a mango in his hand and shared it with his wife.

In the B. I. S. Mandal Quarterly for June 1922, the following paragraph appears on page 176 in connection with the birth date of Chhatrapati Shivaji. Messrs. Chandorkar and S. M. Divekar try to establish that the birth date is Phalgun Vadya 3rd Shaka 1551 (3rd of the dark half of Phalgun month) basing their assumption on the Jadhve chronology which is supported by the unpublished Tamil and Sanskrit "Shiv Bharat" and the Tanjore inscription.

religion. He learnt horsemanship and became an expert in the use of arrow and the lance—the main qualifications of a soldier in the Maharashtra of the 17th century.* His acquaintance with the surrounding country and the study of tribes inhabiting it gave him free scope for developing those qualities which stood him in good stead in his future career as the leader of the Marathas against the power of the Moghuls. Being of a keen intellect Shivaji could gauge the spirit and the tendency of the people and the intolerance of the Moghul myrmidons who had invaded the Deccan for the subjugation of the Maratha power then springing

* "Shivaji's enthusiastic and ardent love for his religion and his strict morality are proverbial indeed. They were the out-come of the early influences due to the Royal preceptor. But Dadoji Kond Dev's advice was not the only force that swayed Shivaji's conduct. The great Maratha leader was also greatly influenced by the spirit of the age, which was the result of the forces called into existence by the saints and poets that did directly as well as indirectly an invaluable service to the cause of the entire Hindu population by their writings and preachings."—*The Marathas and the Moghuls*.

"Dayandev was an out-caste Brahmin. By his devotion to God he won his way to the caste and in the end became a saint. It, therefore, followed, so men said, that in the eyes of God caste must be as nothing and that all earthly disabilities could be overcome by the love and worship of Krishna. Thus Pandharpur came to attract pious men of all castes. The next great saint of Pandharpur was Chokhamala, a Mahar. Sawata was of the Mali or gardener caste. Raka or Gora were Kumbhars or potters. Rohidas was a Chambhar or leather worker. Narhari was a sonar or goldsmith. Kabir was actually a Musalman attracted from the north by the fame of Pandharpur. Namdev, the greatest of all, was a Shimpi or tailor. They were all men of holy and austere lives. Their worship of Krishna was eminently pure and sane."—*Kincaid and Parasnis*, Vol. I, p. 107.

into influence. Dadoji Kond Dev at first disliked Shivaji's conduct and disapproved his rash adventures and militant spirit. Finding, however, that his illustrious pupil was incorrigible and uncontrollable, the old Guruji made virtue of necessity by tacitly acquiescing in the dangerous career which his disciple was following.* Dadoji had a deep

* In the times in which Shivaji was born the country of the Marathas was witnessing a religious revival, the result of the exertions of a succession of saints and poets,—whose hold on the minds of the Marathas was unbounded—which is even difficult to be imagined in these days when religious bonds are being broken asunder. The writings and preachings of saintly poets had roused the minds of the Marathas from their religious dormancy and directed them to an enthusiastic regard for their religion. This religious revival served greatly to join together the hearts of the Marathas and thus bring about a union among them, which, innocent as it was in the beginning, became really dangerous to the power of the Moghul tyrant who was compelled at last to bend his knees before it and to suffer mortifying defeats inflicted by a people, from whom he expected little or no resistance worth the name. The religious sermons preached by these saints to their large audiences were indirectly instrumental in turning the minds of the people against the Moghuls who, Kuran in one hand and sword in the other, marched from province to province, carrying on their religious propaganda. The augmented religious zeal of the Marathas, now united with a sense of common danger and sustained and supported by the still more efficacious influence and advice of their religious preceptors, began gradually to make head against the enemies of their religion and their race."

—*The Marathas and the Moghuls*,
by the present writer.

"At this point it will not be out of place to sketch the lives of two men who each in his own way exercised an influence upon the Maratha Prince. I have in an earlier chapter endeavoured to show how the religious movement of Pandharpur helped the military movement headed by Shivaji."

—*Kincaid and Paramis*, Vol. I, page 179.

rooted love for Shivaji. Such was his affectionate regard for his illustrious pupil that he cared more for him than for his own life. While on his death-bed the pious Dadoji Kond Dev called Shivaji to his side and advised his undaunted disciple to be a defender of the Hindu religion and to protect the cows and the Brahmins, in the performance of which God would bless him. With his advice as well as his blessings, the good old Dadoji Kond Dev breathed his last. The advice fell on fertile fields and obedient ears and the Almighty fulfilled the dying desires of the pious tutor, as subsequent events fully demonstrated. Shivaji had already begun the work of defying the Moghuls. Now he embarked upon his undaunted career by taking fort after fort together with the surrounding districts. When he was but 19 years of age (1646 A. D.) he took possession of the fort of Torna and ceaselessly pursued his plans of laying the foundation of a kingdom, destined to play a glorious part in the History of India. The forts of Kondané, Purandar, Kangori, Tung, Tikona, Lohgad, Rajmachi, and others were taken in due course with the adjoining districts. The success of his operations was so sure that by the year 1664, he was able to proclaim himself as Raja and on the 6th of June 1674 he was formally crowned as the king of the Marathas.*

We have already alluded to the admirable and excellent Life of Shivaji Maharaja by Professor

* The details of the ceremony will be found in the Bakhar, entitled "Shivadigvijaya". Mr. Kincaid has given an excellent account of the coronation ceremony in the first volume of his *Maratha History*, pages 243-248.

Takakhava. With all due deference to this learned scholar, we take this opportunity of expressing our view that a saint's "inspiration and mother's blessing", like "God's grace," cannot detract from the credit of a hero. "God's grace", "saint's blessings" or "inspiration"—all these refer to Divine force, which is incapable of detracting from a hero's credit. In our opinion there does not arise the question of a partition of credit between the Guru and his disciple, Shree Ramdas and Chhatrapati Shivaji. *Vide* page 544 where the learned Professor says:—

"The attempt to transfer to the poet saint the whole credit of the warrior King's achievement is a part of the same campaign that has led certain modern scholars to attribute the first beginnings of his power to Dadoji Kondadev, nay, even to the ministers and advisers of the Raja Shahaji, a refutation of which has already been attempted at the beginning of the sixth chapter."

Has a biographer a right to force upon his hero a trait which the hero himself would disclaim? Surely Ramdas and Shivaji were such illustrious characters that they would never have claimed any credit. Why then should there be a wrangling between the biographers of these two illustrious personages whose lives were characterized by almost superhuman disinterestedness and love of duty for duty's sake?

The following description of Shivaji's life-work in a graphic and glowing style from the able pen of Mr. Kincaid will be interesting to our readers:—

"But great organizer and military genius that Shivaji was, it is in far-seeing statesmanship that he stands supreme. In all history there is no such example of modesty in the face of continued success. The insolent overbearing vanity which has proved the ruin of so many commanders, both in ancient and modern times, found no place in Shivaji's admirably balanced mind. He won victory after victory against Bijapur and the Moghuls, yet his head was never turned. He realized always that he had yet to meet the full power of the Moghul empire. His one aim was to secure the freedom of his countrymen. That he might do so, he sought to win the friendship of Aurangzeb. When that proved impossible, he resolved to secure a place of shelter against the coming peril, which he so clearly foresaw. At last there came a time when his genius bore fruit. Four years after Shivaji's death, the emperor realized that the Marathas were a serious danger. He ceased to send a succession of small armies to Aurangabad. He mobilized the whole military resources of Northern India and an army of several hundred thousand strong, led by the emperor in person, poured through the Vindhya passes to the conquest of the South. Within three years both Golkonda and Bijapur had fallen. Within five years all Maharashtra was overrun. Sambhaji had been taken and executed. Shahu and his mother were prisoners in Aurangzeb's camp. But the Maratha generals headed by Rajaram, adhered to strategy laid down by the great king. Falling behind the southern line of fortresses, built by Shivaji from Bednur to Tanjore, they held the south against the might of all Hindusthan. At length the great offen-

sive weakened. The Maratha captains in their turn began to attack. Slowly but surely they drove the Delhi forces back again across the frontier of the old imperial possessions. At last Aurangzeb, his treasury empty, his grand army destroyed, died a broken man in his camp at Ahmadnagar. Maharashtra was free, southern India was free. The single wisdom of the great king, dead twenty-seven years before, had supplied the place of two hundred battalions."

We give some extracts from "*The Marathas and the Moghuls*" in connection with the work done by the saints of Maharashtra for the national up-lift:—

"Of the Maratha saints, of whose invaluable services in the awakening and development of the national spirit among the Marathas we have already made passing mention, Shree Ramdas Swami was most intimately connected with the founder of the Maratha Empire. Ramdas, considered to be an Avatar of Hanuman, for the purpose of assisting Shivaji in the deliverance of the Hindu race, has played the most important part in moulding the character of the Maratha hero and in influencing his career. This illustrious Sadhu openly preached a war against the Moghuls and his weighty words were not to be in vain. He enjoyed the greatest reverence and confidence of Shivaji who invariably consulted the sage before undertaking any serious work. Shivaji even offered the Maratha kingdom as a charity to his spiritual teacher but being commanded to rule over the state in the name of his Guru, Shivaji adopted the asce-

tics' orange-coloured banner (Bhagwa Zenda) as a sign that the kingdom belonged to an ascetic. Ramdas surpassed all his predecessors in the vehemence of his attack on the tyrannical nature of the Moghul Government and openly advised a large multitude of people that came to hear his sermons 'to fall upon the Moghuls, drive them from this land and spread the Maratha dominion all over the country'. It is needless to say more as to the effect which such stirring sermons must have produced on the minds of the innumerable disciples and followers of this well-known saint who had, it is said, established his title to more than ordinary respect from his audience by working several miracles in the presence of large gatherings of people. Before completing our remarks about the work of the Maratha saints, it is necessary to allude cursorily to the influence of these repeated exhortations, for this influence on the minds of the Marathas can never be ignored by the student of Maratha History. In the present work nothing more than a mere mention of this fact is possible. Suffice it to say that the religious upheaval and the consequent national revival which directly or indirectly was brought about by their writings and preachings was so powerful that it not only checked the persecution inaugurated under the auspices of the great advocate of the Mohamedan faith,—though, in fact, Aurangzeb in the end proved to be the worst enemy of the Mohomedan Empire—nay its veritable destroyer,—but it ultimately extirpated the power that had been the source of so much trouble to the proverbially "mild" Hindu race. The sins of the Deccan Hindus before they attained a state of the greatest political significance, were washed away by the

holy blessings received from the successive Mahatmas and consequently their great country (Maharashtra) was destined to witness, at no distant date, the dawn of happier days fraught with political and territorial greatness, which suffered no abatement for about 150 years in spite of unforeseen dangers and untoward mishaps." *

Day by day Shivaji's power increased. Brahmins and Sudras flocked to his standard and augmented his strength by lending their willing aid to the great hero in the noble work of resisting the career of Moslem oppression. Bijapur felt the rise of the power of Shivaji, resented his encroachments,

* Vide *The Marathas and the Moghuls* by the present writer. The religious revival in Maharashtra was the noble work of the Maratha saints. In the Punjab the Sikhs were persecuted by Aurangzeb. The Sikh Gurus were doing in the Punjab what the Maratha saints had done in Maharashtra. "To the Maratha History a peculiar charm has been added by the part which such celebrated saints as Dnyandev, Aiknath, Tukaram, Ramdas, and others had taken in rousing the Maratha minds from a state of religious torpor and directing them to an enthusiastic observance of Hindu religion. How the revival led to the consequent political revival and territorial greatness may be gathered from a perusal of these pages."—*The Marathas and the Moghuls*.

"Ramdas is said to have met the Gurus of the Sikhs, and in their conversation it is said that the great Maratha saint enlightened the Sikh Guru on many points of higher metaphysics. The doubts which troubled their minds were dispelled after they had met Ramdas. But Ramdas was not the only Maratha saint who influenced the Sikh Guru's teachings. "The earliest composers whose writings are included in the Granth are two Maratha poets, Namdev and Trilochan, whose peculiar dialects akin to the modern Marathi language in many of its forms, prove their birth-place to have been in the Deccan"—*Griffin's Life of Ranjit Singh, Rulers of India Series*.

but was, at last, compelled to keep on friendly terms with the Maratha leader by a grant of Chauth and other privileges. At an early date the Moghul myrmidons who came to the South to fulfil Aurangzeb's ambition of establishing the *Moghul power in the Deccan* at the expense of Bijapur and Golkonda, had to face the danger that arose with the rise of the Maratha hero, and seemed gradually to acquire a strength sufficient to engulf the Moslem power. It would be beyond the scope of the present work to describe all the deeds of prowess, wonderful and stirring as they are, performed by Shivaji during the wars with Moslems. Success had made the Marathas so bold and daring that they carried off the imperial elephants within the pale of the cantonments and even shut the Moghul generals up in their trenches, so that not a single person could come out of the camp without risking his life." Such was the state of the Moghul operations against the Marathas when the celebrated Jaisingh of Jaypore and Dilerkhan were entrusted with the command of the Deccan forces of the Moghuls, employed against the Marathas. The divided command of the Moghul army led to half-hearted and desultory operations, but success graced Jaisingh's amiable and conciliatory policy and Shivaji was prevailed upon to pay a visit to the Emperor of Delhi.* His eldest son Sambhaji

* "... Shivaji received a second letter from the Emperor. In it Aurangzeb invited the Maratta prince to court, promising him leave to return home when he wished. At the same time Aurangzeb again expressed his appreciation of his recent services and informed Shivaji that he had sent him a dress of honour."—Page 216, *Kinoid*.

Was it a dignified act on the part of the old emperor to invite Shivaji to court and then to offer a deliberate insult to

and his trusted servants Raghunathpant Korde, Kadtoji Gujar, Trimbakpant Dabir, Hiraji Phar-zand, Balaji Abaji, Yesaji Kank and Tanaji Malusare were to go with him to the Imperial Court.

Aurangzeb insulted the pride of the great Maratha who, through Jaysingh's persuasion had condescended to pay a visit to the Emperor at Agra.* Aurangzeb's impudence and want of

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the honoured guest? Before starting for Agra, Shivaji had sought the advice of the Goddess Bhavani and of his revered Guru Shree Ramdas.

The reader will be much benefited by a perusal of the Article of Mr. C. V. Vaidya, M. A., LL.B., read before the B. I. S. Mandal's Eighteenth Annual Session at Poona. The veteran scholar Mr. Vaidya shows in the Article entitled "Inaccuracies revealed by recent researches" how Professor Jadunath Sarkar is mistaken in his views expressed in his *Life of Shivaji*.

* *Vide* Kincaid's *Maratha History*, Vol. I, page 217.

"Shivaji had been led by the Rajah Jaysingh to expect that an officer of high rank would be sent to invite him at Agra. But the only officer who accompanied Ramsingh on his return was one Mukhlis Khan, a court official of little or no standing. Nevertheless Shivaji said nothing but started with his escort. On reaching Agra he was given an audience (May 12, 1666). He presented a Nazar or an offering of Rs. 30,000. The Emperor then ordered him to take his place among commanders of 500 horse. This was a deliberate insult. Shivaji had recently taken the field with 10,000 men and commands of 5000 horse had already been conferred on his son Sambhaji and on his subordinate Netaji Palkar. The Maratha prince saw that he was being maliciously flouted and, unable to control himself turned to Ramsingh and spoke frankly his resentment. The young Rajput did his best to

diplomatic skill prevented that blind bigot from availing himself of such an opportunity by securing the good will of a Maratha like Shivaji. But such a thing was not to take place. Shivaji was coldly received and his demands were rejected with disdain. To the Moghul this was really a disaster. What an unbounded accession of strength would have been obtained by the Moghuls if adequate honours had been conferred on Shivaji. But the advantage of the Moghuls would perchance have been the ruin of the great Hindu cause. Fate ordained that the half-clad and half-fed Marathas should trample the luxurious and lace-covered Moghuls under their feet as a retaliation for the countless wrongs done to them and their brethren in other parts of India. Shivaji's disappointment at Agra, therefore, promised for the fulfilment of that great Maratha's ultimate objects. Shivaji effected his escape from the Moghul capital in a miraculous way and returned to the Deccan with a renewed and fixed determination to sap the foundation of the Moghul power. How Shivaji escaped is well told by Mr. Kincaid in his History of the Marathas:—

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pacify him but in vain. Aurangzeb who had no doubt hoped for some such incident, at once took advantage of it. He dismissed Shivaji without ceremony or return presents. He ordered him to be conducted to a house prepared for him near the Taj Mahal outside the city and to be informed that the Emperor had reported Shivaji's conduct to Jaysingh. Until Jaysingh's reply arrived, he was not to present himself at court. Shivaji's son Sambhaji could however do so, but as a retainer of Ramsingh. After Shivaji reached his house a strong guard under a Musalman officer named Poladkhan was placed round it.

“ Eventually Aurangzeb sent a messenger to Shivaji to say that he could return to the Deccan, provided he left behind him his son Sambhaji as a hostage. Had Shivaji accepted this condition, he would have had either to sacrifice his eldest son or to betray his countrymen. He declined it and began at once to consider all possible methods of escape. The same night he saw in a dream Bhavani who, so he fancied, told him that he need fear nothing. She would provide not only for his safety but that for his son. Comforted by his vision, Shivaji's resourceful mind soon evolved a plan which for ingenuity and daring has rarely been equalled. In pursuance of it, he sent a further petition to Aurangzeb, in which he begged that he might at least send his troops back to the Deccan. The Emperor was only too glad to consent to a proposal which robbed Shivaji of his only protectors. And if he felt any suspicions they were skilfully soothed by Shivaji's conduct. After his troops had departed, Shivaji repeatedly said to Polad Khan that he now no longer wished to depart. The Emperor provided for his comfort on a liberal scale. His residence at Agra enabled him to save money, and if he could obtain the Emperor's leave he would send for his wives and mother to Agra also. These words were reported to Aurangzeb by Polad Khan and the Emperor smiled indulgently at what he deemed the petty avarice and mean spirit of the Deccan Chief. Shivaji next asked leave to send his friends in Agra sweetmeats and choice dishes prepared in the Deccan manner. The leave was given and Shivaji's friends gladly received the presents and sent him similar gifts in return. Shivaji sent further presents and

received further return gifts. Thus hardly a day passed without a stream of wicker-work baskets passing into or going out of the prisoner's door. At first Polad Khan had them all carefully examined. But gradually his vigilance relaxed and the guards daily let the baskets pass without troubling to examine them. Suddenly Shivaji announced himself ill. He complained of acute pain in the liver and spleen. He sent for the best doctors in Agra and they prescribed for him various remedies. At first they seemed to do the patient little good. But in a few days Shivaji declared himself better and ordered that more baskets of sweetmeats should be prepared and sent to his friends, that they might rejoice with him his recovery. He also bought three horses which he sent to some of his attendants along the Mathura road. They were, he gave out, to be given as presents to the Brahmins there, whose prayers to Krishna, had won his recovery. That evening Shivaji and his son got each into a sweetmeat basket and their remaining followers, disguised as porters carried them out. One only of his retinue, the faithful Hiraji Pharzand stayed behind. He entered Shivaji's bed, and covered his head with muslin but left exposed one of his hands upon which Shivaji had placed his own signet ring."—*Kincaid*, Vol. I, p. 219.

Shivaji's return was but the dawn of an irresistible rising in Maharashtra against the inveterate enemies of the Hindu race and the commencement of an era, of which success was the most leading characteristic. In a short time Shivaji made himself so powerful that the Moghuls began to despair

of success. His prestige was so firmly established as to exceed even the sanguine expectations of his most ardent followers. The triumphant career of this illustrious Maratha was unchecked until the great dissolver death quenched the extraordinary energy of the incomparable and illustrious Shivaji. Shivaji died in 1680 of a fever brought on by a swelling in his joints. The Mohomedan historian, the official panegyrist of the court of Aurangzeb, alludes to the comparative premature death of the "immortal" Shivaji in such words as became the intolerant spirit of Aurangzeb's courtiers.* Of Shivaji's work we refrain from saying anything for fear of being charged with partiality by praising one who is the idol of the Maratha people, whether they be Maratha Brahmins or the Marathas. We will supply the most reliable materials to our readers and leave

* "Kafir Jahannum Raft" (The infidel went to hell). This is the way in which the court historian speaks of the death of Shivaji. But how can justice be expected from the satellites of Aurangzeb? Shivaji's life and work are too grand to suffer in any way by the words of Khafi Khan or any other biased historian. The "Bundella Chief" and Orme speak about Shivaji in the following way:—

"In personal activity he exceeded all generals of whom there is record. For no partizan appropriated to service of detachment alone ever traversed as much ground as he at the head of armies. He met every emergency of peril, however sudden or extreme, with instant discernment and unabaken fortitude; the ablest of his officers acquiesced to the imminent superiority of his genius, and the boast of the soldier was to have seen Shivaji charging sword in hand."—Orme's *Historical Fragments*. The Bundella Chief speaks about Shivaji in similar terms. Sir Jadunath Sarkar has not said even a word in refutation of Khafi Khan's unmanly insult to the memory of the great Maratha hero!

them to draw their own conclusions as regards this subject. In order thoroughly to understand the life and work of Shivaji, one must be able to know what the condition of the Maratha people was before the birth of the deliverer of the Hindu race and what it became after his death. This will be best learnt from an extract from the work of Mr. Lane-Poole who cannot be charged with partiality for the great Maratha hero. "These people (the Marathas, including Brahmins as well as Marathas) never made any mark in history before the reign of Aurangzeb. They had been peaceful, frugal husbandmen like the mass of the lower order of the Hindus and had given no trouble to their rulers. Their chief or village headmen were Sudras of the lowest of the four castes like their people, though they pretended to trace their pedigree to the Rajputs and thus connected themselves with the noble caste of the Kshatriyas. In the silent times of peace, the Marathas enjoyed the happiness of the nation that has no history. As regards the predominant influence which they began to exercise during and after Shivaji's reign *

* Shivaji's features are described as follows :—

"Unhappily no portrait survives of the great king when he was still a boy. But he had suffered troubles early. He had long been separated from his father and to avoid captivity he had lived for years hidden in woods and caves. It is possible, therefore, that although his cheeks were rounder and his skin smoother, he did not much differ in boyhood from the pictures which still exist of Shivaji in manhood. The brow is wrinkled as if with grave and constant thought. The cheeks are burnt with long exposure to sun and rain and deeply furrowed as if with anxiety and care. But the nose is curved like a falcon's beak. The eyes are large and bold. The thin lips are compressed with inflexible resolution. The

at first over the political affairs of the Deccan and afterwards over those of the whole of India, the reader will know much from the pages that follow." "War", says Lane-Poole, "brought on (during Shivaji's lifetime) their dormant capacities and their daggers soon cut their name deep in the annals of India." In the last sentence will be found a brief but sufficiently expressive and emphatic verdict of the historian on the career of our greatest hero, whom even Aurangzeb was compelled to call "a great captain".* The development of a "mountain rat"† into "a great captain" must, indeed, be a wonderful phenomenon and the panegyric, coming as it does from the lips of the bigoted Aurangzeb, must certainly be considered as the highest recognition of the noble work of the great Maratha hero who gave an everlasting quietus to the ignoble ambition of the undoer and upsetter of the great Akbar's fair work.

SAMBHAJI

Sambhaji succeeded Shivaji. Though a brave and spirited soldier, he was yet an indolent and dissolute youth, frequently guided by caprice. He was consequently unfit to occupy the place

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whole face speaks eloquently of trouble bravely borne and dangers triumphantly surmounted. Shivaji's body was short but broad and stoutly built. And a legend survives that, like those of Arjuna, the epic archer, the fingers of his long sinewy arms reached below his knees."—*Kincaid*, p. 129.

* The reader will be much benefited by a perusal of Mr. H. A. Ackworth's admirable introduction to the *Maratha Ballads*.

† Aurangzeb used contemptuously to call Shivaji "a mountain rat"!

vacated by his illustrious father. But the national spirit and the religious enthusiasm kindled and gradually developed in Maharashtra long before his time, were yet alive and promised to thrive in spite of Sambhaji's apathy and incompetency. Hence the worthless character of Shivaji's successor proved of no considerable avail to opponents of the Marathas, though for some time to come the onward career was for obvious reasons temporarily impeded. The people of Maharashtra had been already accustomed to the task of defying the Moghul invaders. They were already inspired by the several forces,* already alluded to, to entertain a universal hatred for the "zulum" of the

* Much has been said already about this matter. Mr. Kincaid's observations in this connection are very charming:—"But there was yet another side to the character of this versatile prince. In an earlier chapter I have sketched Shivaji's relations with Ramdas and Tukaram. But they were not the only wise and pious men to whom Shivaji was drawn. The poet Mahipati has in the *Bhaktivijaya* told the story how the great king went from Pandharpur into the woods to visit an Ujjain Sadhu called Ganeshnath. Shivaji made Ganeshnath return with him to his camp and gave him a soft bed with rich coverlets to sleep upon. But the saint shamed the king by strewing pebbles over the downy mattress. Shivaji took the lesson so much to heart that he sold the couch and gave its price in charity, sleeping ever afterwards on a village cot. Other friends of Shivaji were Kaval Bharati of Kenjal, Taponidhi Devbharati of Khandesh and Sidheshwarbhat of Chakan. He even extended his favour to a Musalman Fakir named Baba Yakub. Such was the liberator of the Maratha nation, a man of talents so varied, of life so regular, of disposition so tolerant, that it is little wonder that his countrymen came to regard him not as one of themselves but as the incarnation of God. His kingdom has long passed away, but the Maratha people still worship his image at Rayagad and Malwan just as the Athenians long after

Moghuls, the enemies of their race, liberty and religion. Dhanaji Jadhav and Santaji Ghorpade who had seen active service long before this were the living representatives of that spirit which was called into existence in Maharashtra in the earlier part of the 17th century. Their followers were made of the same stuff. The prodigies of valour performed by Dhanaji and Santaji with the assistance of their deeply attached followers, were such as would curdle the Moghul's blood whenever they heard of them. What is worthy of our special notice is that the Marathas after Shivaji's death had to face not a vacillating half-hearted opposition from the Emperor's luxury-seeking deputies, but a stubborn warfare carried on after the year 1681 by the Emperor in person at the head of his countless myrmidons. But Providence, who presides and guides the destiny of a fallen and persecuted nation, was on the side of the Marathas who, notwithstanding all the troubles and disappointments yet in store for them, finally came out successful from the prolonged struggle with the Moghuls.

The Moghul operations in the Deccan were now conducted, as we have already mentioned, under the direct supervision of the Emperor whose advent in Maharashtra was the precursor of a most malignant form of persecution which served to excite still further the already exasperated Marathas, whose ranks were daily swollen by Hindu recruits anxious to find shelter

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their Empire had ceased to exist, continued to worship with pathetic devotion the memory of 'Thesens.'—Kincaid, . Vol. I, p. 277.

from tyranny as well as employment under the growing power of the Marathas. The Zizia which Aurangzeb ought to have been wise enough not to introduce at least in Maharashtra was revived in the Deccan and stringent measures were adopted for the collection of the odious tax, which emphasized the distinction between the Moslem rulers and their Hindu subjects. Another imprudent order was* issued by the Emperor to the effect that no Hindu, after the proclamation of the mandate, should sit in a palanquin or ride an Arab horse without previously obtaining the permission of the Moghul Government. These acts, more worthy of a madman than a ruler of an Empire, were greatly instrumental in strengthening the Hindu party by effecting a closer union among them as well as in widening the breach between the ruler and the ruled. Another and a most noteworthy consequence of such an attempt to carry on reckless persecution was that the religious zeal of the Marathas was immensely deepened. They exerted themselves to the utmost to defend their religion and to resist the encroachments of the Moghuls. Here then was an interesting spectacle of a contest between the Hindu and Moslem religious zeal, and the following pages will show that the former was destined to have the whiphand of the latter. The part which was assigned to the Marathas was certainly of a defensive rather than of an offensive or aggressive nature. There were other causes, arising out of the difference between the characters and habits of the Marathas and the Moghuls, which, in the long run, secured victory

**Life and Times of Madhavrao Sindhia* by Mr. Nattu.

for the side of Maharashtra, which was also to a great extent the side of the whole Hindu population of India. The Moghul soldiery had become effeminate to a degree. Moghul generals were as careless or useless as the Sepoys who composed the grand army of Aurangzeb. In a country like Maharashtra, whose hills and mountain tops are studded with forts, it was an impossible task to vanquish the Marathas by one strong effort. Continued and unflagging exertions on the part of the Moghuls were certainly required if the Marathas were to be curbed; but such perseverance could not be expected from an army of epicures and pleasure-seekers. Moreover Aurangzeb's suspicious mind had greatly impaired whatever of ability and efficiency still characterized some of the Moghul generals. The misguided Emperor had confidence in no one of his courtiers and generals. Whatever was to be done, was done by the Emperor's direct sanction. Whenever he delegated his authority to some lord of his Court, he was always particular about sending some other person with him to supervise his conduct. This produced a feeble action and the Marathas were far too powerful to be subdued by such a feeble resistance to their onward career. The Marathas had, thus, no reason to fear any considerable or permanent danger to their power from Aurangzeb's generals, most of whom were, in fact, padded dandies. The Marathas, on the contrary, cared nothing for luxuries; hard work and hard fare were their accustomed diet and a cake of millet sufficed them for a meal, with perhaps an onion for 'point'. They defended a fort to the last, and then defended another fort. They were

pursued from place to place, but were never daunted ; and they filled up the intervals of sieges by harassing the Moghul armies, stopping convoys of supplies and laying the country waste in the path of the enemies. This difference in the character of the two races, that were bent on destroying each other, serves as a key to the solution of the question as to how victory ultimately graced the Maratha exertions.*

But the path of the Marathas was not yet free from the thorns and troubles that came in the form of difficulties to all men earnestly working for their emancipation from unjust and unnatural oppression as though to test the stuff they were made of as well as to heighten the worth of the object aimed at. During the short interval of about 12 months, 1689-90, the Marathas met with disheartening reverses. Their forts fell one by one into the hands of their enemies and even their brave but misguided chief Sambhaji was captured by the Moghul army and afterwards put to death with circumstances of exceptional barbarity in 1688. This atrocious deed sent round the whole nation a thrill of horror and indignation. Instead of being discouraged or disheartened, the Marathas girded up their loins to face the danger with an unyielding spirit and uncommon fortitude. With an unswerving determination and unflagging zeal, they devised fresh measures for bettering their

*This account given by Mr. Lane-Poole in his *Aurangzeb* is a paraphrase of the clear description which the Hon. Mr. Elphinstone has given in his *History* pp. 657-664. According to Mr. Elphinstone a defeat to the Marathas was like a blow given to water, which offers no resistance to the stroke and retains no impression of its effect.

chances of success. In fact, the cruel death which Sambhaji met in the Moghul camp, went a long way to bring the Marathas down like a thunderbolt upon the Moghuls. "The Marathas became increasingly objects of dread to the demoralized Moghul army." The forts taken by the Moghuls were gradually retaken from them and even the short-sighted Emperor, surrounded as he was by his countless hosts, was looted, occasionally shut up in his own trenches, and frequently mortified by the news that his supplies were cut off by the troops of the Marathas that hovered in the vicinity without any fear. This was indeed a fitting recompense for the innumerable wrongs done gratuitously to the Hindus by the hard-hearted Aurangzeb. The army of the Moghuls was no match for the hardy Maratha troops that moved about with the speed of lightening and hence the Maratha incursions could not be checked in such a manner as to obviate their recurrence in future. The method of warfare which the Marathas adopted is worthy of notice. They never risked an engagement in the open field unless their numbers made victory a certainty. When the heavy Moghul cavalry attacked them, the hardy little warriors (mounted on wiry steeds as inured to fatigue as themselves and splendidly broken in for their tactics) would instantly scatter in all directions and observe the enemy from a neighbouring hill or wood, ready to cut off solitary horsemen, or surprise small parties in ambush, and then if the pursuers gave up the useless chase in a moment the Marathas were upon them, hanging on their flanks, despatching stragglers and firing at close quarters into the unwieldy mass. To fight with such people was to do battle with the air or

to strike blows upon water; like wind or waves they scattered and bent before the blows only to close in again the moment the pressure was taken off.* Before such foes the Moghul at last was compelled to bend his knees.

The scenes that the Deccan witnessed during the trying period of 17 years, following the assassination of Sambhaji and ending with the end of Aurangzeb's early career, are entitled to great consideration owing to their inobscurable significance and under these circumstances some passing mention must be made of some of them at least. After putting Sambhaji to death and placing Shahu in custody, Aurangzeb thought that he had gained the object of his mission to the southern Provinces. Rajaram effected his escape to Jinji after these occurrences. The Emperor thus found the field clear of all difficulties and everything seemed to be favourable to the realization of his visionary schemes. But the events that followed proved the vanity of Aurangzeb's hopes and left him no other choice than that of chafing at the irresistible raids of the Marathas and forming fresh plans for punishing what he considered to be the unbearable audacity of the followers of the "mountain rat" when he had already one foot in the grave. The national spirit kindled in the Deccan† owing to the working

* This description is based on the information gathered from Elphinstone, Duff, and several Marathi works.

† See *Jinji*-Was an excellent work from the pen of Mr. Kale, describing Rajaram's danger and the devotion, spirit of self-sacrifice and innumerable qualities of his followers. The history of this period is really heart-stirring and worthy of study by every student of Maratha History.

of various forces, of which the religious revival was the most prominent, had its roots so firmly fixed in the minds of the people of Maharashtra that no amount of distress or disaster could dissuade them from the path of the onward movement which they had been led to pursue. No part of India, no Indian community, had ever displayed such an undaunted spirit in resisting to the last the inhuman encroachments of the Moghul Emperor, as was displayed by the Marathas even during the most troublous period lasting from 1689 to 1706. Our Hindu brethren of the Punjab, the Sikhs, were no doubt characterized to a degree by such a spirit in the days of their illustrious Gurus but the influence of the religious revival as well as of the national spirit of the Sikhs was of a limited nature in spite of the well-known valour of the Sikh people and notwithstanding some advantages in their favour. Although the Sikhs did much to check the Moslem power, yet they were not destined to play so important a part in the extirpation of the Moghul Empire, as fell to the lot of their brethren of the South, the Marathas. Patriotism, spirit of union, love of danger, and unbending opposition to the Moghul persecutor,—these were the characteristics of the Marathas during the critical period, in which their king was assassinated, and Shahu, the centre of their hope and affection, was a helpless captive in Aurangzeb's camp. Several causes combined together to make the chances of the Marathas more hopeful. Of these, the most important was the total destruction of the kingdoms of Bijapur and Golkonda in 1686 and 1687 respectively. The destruction of these two states was a great accession of strength to the Marathas in various ways. The

vanquished armies of these states found shelter under the hospitable roof of the Marathas, and thus there was a distinct encouragement to their party. Aurangzeb had been labouring under the mistaken notion that the annexation of Bijapur and Golkonda—the two Moslem states which paid tribute to the Marathas for purchasing the safety of their kingdoms—would facilitate the work of crushing the Marathas, as the chief sources of the Maratha revenue would be destroyed with the fall of Bijapur and Golkonda. But the unfortunate Emperor, whose life was doomed to be a "colossal failure," was as completely wrong in holding such a view as he was in all other undertakings. Though the two Mohomedan states were, to some extent, sources of Maratha revenue, they were also to a great degree direct checks to the Marathas. The two states served as buffers between the two rival powers—the Marathas and the Moghuls. The removal of the buffer states brought the two contending powers more closely together and the degeneracy of the Moghuls began to give way before the irresistible march of the Maratha power. The guerilla warfare of the Marathas was too much for the luxurious Moghul commanders. The Moghul efforts and exertions were of no avail against the Marathas who became the more formidable in the hour of peril. While things were in this condition, the cause of all troubles to the Moghuls and the root of all the persecution to the Hindu race was swept away by the hand of death. Aurangzeb died of despair at Ahmadnagar in 1707.*

*So low was the Emperor reduced, that he was persuaded by Kambaksh to authorize overtures to the enemy. (*Elphinstone* p. 669). How miserable the condition of Aurangzeb

About this Emperor who came to the Deccan ostensibly to extend his power at the expense of Marathas and the two remaining Mohomedan states but who, to say the truth, struck the first decisive blow with his own hand at his power by such an act, it is necessary to say, *en passant*, a few words. It was this monarch who, by inaugurating a religious persecution of the Hindus,* strengthened the already awakened zeal of the Marathas for their religion and thereby roused them to the performance of those deeds of valour that ultimately gave a death-blow to the kingdom of Islam in India. Much has already been said as to how the Hindus were oppressed in every possible way. His greatest ambition was to crush the Maratha power but by the unknowable yet unalterable and unfailing fiat of Providence, the Marathas were to be the sole instrument in the subversion of the Mohomedan Empire and in avenging the wrongs done to the entire Hindu population of India during the rule of Aurangzeb. His life is unanimously declared to be a complete failure, a series of political blunders that admitted of no mending or even

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was and in what miserable state his troops were may be learnt from *Elphinstone's History*, pp. 670-671.

*My friend, Pandit....., a Kashmiri Brahmin, told me a pathetic story in which the Kashmir Hindus were ground down with a view to forcibly convert them to Islam after the usual persecution. He told me that except eleven Brahmin families, all the Brahmins in Kashmir had to forsake their religion and accept the Mohomedan faith. It is said that Aurangzeb had promulgated stringent orders in Kashmir for the accomplishment of this object. Should not these converts be re-claimed by the Kashmir Hindus?

palliation. The Mohomedan historian, the ardent admirer of Aurangzeb, was constrained to confess that "every plan that Aurangzeb formed came to little good ; every enterprise failed."* Aurangzeb had, in fact, recklessly pitted his conscience against the world and the world had triumphed over it. In every part of India discontent and disaffection, the unavoidable consequence of imprudent and unjust persecution, reigned supreme. The Marathas were irresistible; the Sikhs were not less formidable; the proud Rajputs, the staunch supporters of the Moghul throne in the reign of Akbar, had formally severed their connection with the Moghul Court, and asserted their independence in 1707. Thus in this monarch's unhappy reign the Mohomedan Empire was torn to pieces. Henceforth, the Moghul emperors existed in name alone. Their power and place was taken by force of arms as well as by intellect by the very Marathas whom Aurangzeb desired to crush but whose pensioners his descendants were destined to be in the near future.†

Now let us present to our readers a translation of some extracts taken from "Bhukan Hazārā" which gives a true as well as a glowing account of the noble work achieved by the illustrious Shivaji.

*See Lane-Poole's "*Life of Aurangzeb*". The author concludes his remarks with regard to the work of the emperor in the following words: "No curtain ever dropped on a more woeful tragedy."

†From 1714 down to the actual fall of the Moghul empire they were literally at the mercy of the Marathas (for details see later on.)

It is really a pleasure to find that even the contemporaries of Shivaji, living in such a distant part as Hindustan, were so thoroughly able to make an exact estimate of the achievements of the great Maratha hero. It would not be, perhaps, too much to say that the Hindustani poet knew the worth of the Maratha leader better than many of his own Maratha contemporaries did; and this fact would be clearly understood by a perusal of the three verses that we have borrowed from Shri Ramdas's life.

(a) In this verse the great poet compares Shivaji to the Divine Shri Rama of Ayodhya, who killed Ravana and extirpated the influence of those demons who were opposed to the Ruler of Ayodhya. Like Rama Shivaji sprang tiger-like upon the race of the Mohomedans.

(b) Benares would have lost her lustre, Mathurā would have been turned into a Masjid, but for the birth of Shivaji the whole Hindu race would have been circumcised (converted to Islam).

(c) Shivaji saved the Vedas from destruction . . . He crushed the Moghuls, confounded the emperors, pounded the enemies to dust. The might of Shivaji's sword maintained the dignity of the princes, saved the idols in the temples from injury and allowed a free scope to the Hindu religion in every Hindu home.*

Such is the testimony which the great poet bears to the life-work of the Maratha hero. The Maratha Empire itself serves as the best monument

*These three verses have been translated for the benefit of our readers, as the original Hindusthani verses are rather abstruse and so unintelligible to Marathi speaking readers.

of what the great Shivaji did and the bigoted Aurangzeb undid during their respective life-times. To the writers of Maratha History it must be certainly highly gratifying to see that the undying achievements of their national hero were appreciated even in the most distant parts of India by a celebrated poet, who belonged to a caste, naturally inclined to sing the deeds of valour performed by the proud dynasty of Udaipur, so deservingly immortalized by Colonel Todd in his *Annals of Rajasthan*.

The year which followed the death of Aurangzeb, was a year of the greatest weakness of the Moghuls, as their empire was threatened by dangers from within as well as from without. To escape the troubles from the Marathas, Zulfikar Khan, whose ability and foresight could gauge the prevailing feeling in the Deccan with regard to their Chief—Shahu, who was yet with the Moghuls, suggested a plan which afterwards was adopted by Azim Shah before his departure from the south. Zulfikar Khan suggested the release of Shahu from Moghul custody. Here, then, was a distinct attempt to set the Marathas against one another and profit by the dissensions among them and in this attempt success crowned the exertions of the Moghuls.*

* "The increasing contentions of these two branches of the family of Shivaji (Kolhapur and Satara) had created such anarchy as to bring the Maratha state to the verge of ruin, when the genius of Balaji Vishwanath placed the party of Shahu in the ascendant and rekindled the smouldering energies of the nation. It was to his energy that the rapid expansion of the Maratha power, when it had reached the limit of depression, is to be attributed, and he may justly be regarded as the second founder of its greatness." See Marshman's *History of India*.

Henceforth, the Maratha energy was directed towards the accomplishment of two purposes,* of quelling internal dissensions and disputes and of making encroachments on the enfeebled dominion of the Moghuls. Being subjected to such two-fold pressure, the Maratha operations slackened in their force and though Shahu was able to have his position secured through the laudable exertions of the famous Dhanaji Jadhav and other followers yet the Marathas were able to do scarcely anything that may be deemed of any great political significance during the period that lasted from 1707 to 1714. The memorable year 1714 witnessed the rise of a saviour, the able Peshwa Balaji Vishwanath of Shriwardhan, under whose lead the Maratha power revived and began again to recover its former tone and vigour†, as may be seen from the following pages.

*For a long time there was a feud between the house of Satara and that of Kolhapur. For details see *Grant Duff* or *Maratha Bakhars*.

†For details about the excellent work done by Balaji Vishwanath in the interests of Maharashtra, the reader should go through the *Rise and Growth of the Maratha Power* by Mr. Justice Ranade and *Marathi Riyasat* by Mr. Govind Sakharam Sirdesai; these authors have shown with great lucidity, how Balaji Vishwanath directed the attention of the Marathas to the upper provinces of India and thus brought about a unity of purpose amongst the Marathas, thereby conducing to the gradual suppression of internal dissensions. Ranade and Kincaid have done much for those who cannot approach the original Marathi materials, so zealously published by indefatigable scholars like Sane, Rajwade, Khare, Parasnis and others. The publications of the "Bharat Itihas Sanshodhak Mandal" have added enormously to the stock of historical information on many a historical point either ignored by Grant Duff or misrepresented by him and those who have followed him. *Vide also The Rise of the Peshwas* by Prof. H. N. Sinha, of Nagpur.

CHAPTER I

BIRTH AND RESIDENCE IN THE IMPERIAL CAMP

Chhatrapati Shahu was born in the December of the memorable year 1680, the very year, in which his illustrious grandfather Shivaji died at Raygad and in which his father Sambhaji embarked upon a relentless career after succession to the kingship of the Marathas.* His mother Yesubai was in the Gangoli Fort in the Konkan at the time of Shahu's birth and the condition of her mind was anything but satisfactory, as the reports of her husband, Sambhaji's misdeeds reached her ears and made her despondent. The Almighty, however, was the Saviour of the illustrious line of the great Shivaji and, as the coming pages will show, His grace blessed Yesubai's child in spite of the direst dangers and gravest difficulties. The Eternal art alone

*Sambhaji led a laudable life prior to his ascending the Gadi. From the June of 1680, when he was crowned king of the Marathas, he forgot all his former virtues and began a regime of cruelty and imprudence, of which the details are heart-rending. He signalized the beginning of his reign by imprisoning Rajaram and his mother Soyarabai at Raygad. He was not contented with this diabolical deed. He ordered Soyarabai to be killed for the frivolous and imaginary charge of poisoning Shivaji. Soyarabai met with a cruel death by being buried alive in a well. The Sachiva, Annaji Datto was imprisoned and then put to death by being tied to an elephant's foot. The Peshwa Moropant Pingle was loaded with fetters. The property of the Sachiva and the Peshwa was confiscated. This was the fate of the prominent partisans of Soyarabai. Many others of lesser note were decapitated or imprisoned or otherwise dealt with in the most merciless manner.

could educe good from evil. Yesubai attended to the safety of the child and devotedly reared him up in the midst of the surrounding turmoils and the lurking dangers which loomed in the political horizon. Shahu, the pride, the hope and the joy of Maharashtra attained his eighth year in the December of 1688, the year which was as fatal to the interests of the family of Bhonsle, as it was to the people of Maharashtra* and the Maratha power in general. As the fates had ordained, the conduct of Sambhaji became, day by day, more hopeless, and he in company with Kavi Kabji alias Kalushâ, his friend, philosopher and guide,† became an eyesore to his people by reason of his fiendish acts and devilish demeanour. The old and faithful servants of the state were dispensed with and everything was done with the counsel of this Kalushâ whose name became as odious as his misdeeds deserved. Such a grossly misguided regime was certainly unfit to cope with the Moghul opposition now vigilently conducted in the Deccan under the personal supervision of Aurangzeb. The noble work done by the illustrious Shivaji was being undone by Sambhaji and his adviser Kalushâ. The Marathas lost their forts one by one, together with the adjoining districts and the Mara-

* *Vide The Marathas and the Moghuls* by the present writer and also *The History of the Marathas* by Kincaid for a clear view of the times and the pitiable condition of Maharashtra and other parts of Hindusthan.

† Sambhaji's private life was censurable. He dishonoured several ladies of respectable families and made himself very unpopular. He paid little attention to the State affairs and displeased his generals and officers generally by his wayward and immoral behaviour.

the power had almost come to its lowest state. Sambhaji paid little heed to this deplorable state of his country. The crisis reached its culminating point at Sangmeshwar in the Konkan districts (now the Ratnagiri zilla), where Sambhaji was passing his life in the most dissolute manner in company with Kalushâ, regardless of all consequences and deaf to all salutary counsels. At this place (Sangmeshwar) the Moghul officer Takareeb Khan surprised Sambhaji and his devilish party by a pre-concerted and well-managed attack, carefully conducted in person by Takareeb Khan who came by the road of Kolhapur with the speed worthy of an able general. Sambhaji and his party were put to rout. The wretched Kalushâ was imprisoned. Sambhaji met the same fate. Takareeb Khan took Sambhaji and Kalushâ with all the pomp and glory of a victorious general to the camp of Aurangzeb at Akluja (in Solapur district). Here Sambhaji was placed before the blind bigot Aurangzeb, the persecutor of the Hindu race and the oppressor of his people. The scene that ensued was extremely sad and heart-rending, as was expected from the imprudent Emperor. Aurangzeb demanded as the condition of Sambhaji's safety that he should accept Islam.* Sambhaji defied the Emperor

* *Vide The Marathas and the Moghuls* by the present writer for details about Aurangzeb's fanaticism and his treatment of the Hindus.

Mr. Lane-Poole has duly described the fiendish acts of Aurangzeb and the zulum perpetrated by him upon such worthy persons as Govind Singh's sons and many others. Mr. Lane-Poole sums up Aurangzeb's career as follows: "No curtain ever dropped on a more woeful tragedy."

by denouncing the founder of Islam!* Here was a scene of the contest between Aurangzeb's blind bigotry and Sambhaji's fiery but misguided spirit. Infuriated beyond all measure, the heartless Emperor ordered that the imprudent Sambhaji should be put to death in the most cruel manner. Sambhaji was decapitated at Tulapur in the December of 1689 A. D., publicly in the Bazar in such a barbarous manner as beggars all description. We leave it to our readers to imagine the feelings of the Marathas when their king Sambhaji, wicked as he was, was publicly decapitated by the orders of Aurangzeb, whose forces laid a siege, at no distant date, to the fort of Raygad, where Yesubai with the hero of this narrative was living. Zulfikar Khan conducted the operations against the Fort, which surrendered to the Moghuls after an opposition lasting for more than ten months. Zulfikar Khan conveyed the noble message† of the high-

*Sambhaji agreed to be converted to Islam if the Emperor gave his daughter in marriage to him. Sambhaji's untimely boldness in denouncing the Prophet was, however, too much for Aurangzeb, who was not to be appeased by anything else than the death of Sambhaji. The Maratha records (*Kavyetihas Sangraha*) well described the praiseworthy conduct of the Emperor Aurangzeb's daughter who, with a laudable spirit of nobility and humanity resolved to remain ever unmarried and to regard Shahu as her son and the members of the family of Sambhaji as her own. Aurangzeb's daughter keenly felt the death of Sambhaji and by her noble acts of humanity and generosity she showed that her resolution was as unshaken as it was laudable.

†The name of this Begum was Zinat-un-nisa. She was the second daughter of Aurangzeb and had come with the Emperor to the Deccan. Her sister Zab-un-nisa was much enamoured of the Chhatrapati Shivaji, when she saw the great

mindful Begum (Aurangzeb's daughter) to the besieged at Raygad. Yesubai consulted her advisers and after due deliberation of the terms of the message, determined to make a virtue of necessity by submitting to the inevitable. The Khan evinced considerable generosity in treating the besieged with much kindness. Yesubai and Shahu, accompanied by Jyotiba Keskar, Moropant Subnis, Udhav Yogdev, and others, were taken to the camp of the Emperor, where the proverbial kindness of the Emperor's daughter was greatly instrumental in ensuring the safety of Yesubai and her son Shahu, whom the said daughter had begun to regard as her son ever since the assassination of Sambhaji. Wonderful, indeed, are the workings of Kismet (Fate)! After the tragical termination of the siege of the fort of Raygad and the removal of Yesubai and Shahu to Aurangzeb's camp, the Maratha leaders amongst whom Pralhad Niraji, Janardan Hanmante, Ramchandra Bhutkar, Khando Ballal Chitnis, Mahadji Naik (Pansambal), Santaji Ghorpade, Dhanaji Jadhav, and Khanderao Dabhade were prominent,—arrived at the conclusion (with Yesubai's concurrence) that Rajaram should be the regent and should conduct the state affairs in the name of their minor King Shahu. After the fall of Raygad, Rajaram went to Jinji, where he crowned himself as the king of the Marathas. The details of the siege of Jinji are interesting. The

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hero's manly bearing and majestic appearance at Agra. Shivaji was duly informed of her rapturous and heart-felt love for the Deccan hero and her resolve to marry him, provided he accepted the Islamic faith. Shivaji, of course, rejected the idea and disapproved of it entirely.

old Emperor had almost come to his wit's end when he found that the Marathas were yet unsubdued though he had been pursuing them for the last seventeen years. The fort of Jinji was taken by the Moghuls in 1698 A. D. when Rajaram repaired to Vishalgad and afterwards to Satara, which place he made his capital in 1699 A. D. Rajaram was joined by Parsoji Bhonsle, Hyabtrao Nimbalkar, Nemaji Sindhia, and others when he was attacking the Moghuls on the northern bank of the Godavari with the object of releasing Shahu from Moghul custody. But he was foiled in the attainment of his aim,* as the Emperor had been invited by his daughter for a banquet that very night and had gone there in company with Shahu.† While the old Emperor was busily engaged in the vain pursuit of vanquishing the Marathas, his Vazirs suggested a plan of coming to terms with the Marathas. Aurangzeb was willing to conclude a peace if the Marathas acknowledged the Moghul sovereignty and submitted unconditionally. The negotiations, however, fell through, as Dhanaji

* Rajaram's forces were very large at this time, amounting to more than 50,000, while Dhanaji Jadhav, Sidhoji Nimbalkar and Sarsoji Bhonsle had additional forces at their command. *Vide* the Introduction for details about the prodigies of valour performed by Dhanaji Jadhav and Santaji Ghorpade.

† Rajaram's night attack on the Moghul camp was successful in all other respects, as he obtained a large booty. As Aurangzeb kept his Zanana at a distance from the camp and as the Emperor had gone for a banquet that night to his daughter along with Shahu, Rajaram could not succeed in meeting the latter and carrying him away from the Moghul camp.

Jadhav strongly objected to being proclaimed servants of the Moghuls. Enraged at the audacity of the Marathas, Aurangzeb pressed Zulfikar Khan to pursue the operations with greater zeal against the Marathas. Zulfikar Khan, though at heart a friend of Rajaram since his supersession by Kambaksh, continued the pursuit. Meanwhile, Rajaram exhausted by overexertions, became ill and after a short illness died of Nawajwar at Sinhagad in 1700 A. D.*

Tarabai, the senior Queen of Rajaram, undertook the administration of the Raj† after formally placing her son Shivaji on the Mansud with

* It was a cruel blow to the Maratha Power that their king Rajaram died prematurely, when his generals like Dhanaji and advisers like Pralhad Niraji had upheld that power against all odds. Long before his death Rajaram had dispensed with Santaji Ghorpade and this was an indiscreet act undoubtedly, as Santaji was the bravest of the lot and worthy of support. While in such a condition of practical exile, Santaji's noble life met with a sad end. While the brave soldier was bathing in a stream, his inveterate foe Nagoji Mane of Mhuswad cut off his head in 1698 A. D. Every Maratha must feel for such a sad end of a noble career.

† With Tarabai's entry into the political arena begins a most complicated and difficult period in Maratha History. Plots and counter-plots soon set in. The Moghuls found a good opportunity to set the parties against each other and profit by the dissensions that followed. When Shahu was released later on and came to the Deccan, the scenes which were witnessed by Maharashtra were indeed pitiable. Recent researches have shown how Balaji Vishwanath, Baji Rao and Balaji Baji enabled Shahu to come out in an eminently successful manner from the sad scenes. The Maratha power had to face a great ordeal from which with difficulty Shahu escaped in a creditable way.

the aid of Ramchandrapant Amatya, Sankarji Narayan Sachiv, and Dhanaji Jadhav, while at the same time, she managed to put Rajusbai and her son Sambhaji aged about three into confinement. Tarabai's conduct, as subsequent events shewed, laid the foundation of feuds which were with difficulty surmounted afterwards by the Peshwas.

CHAPTER II

SHAHU'S MARRIAGE; RELEASE FROM CUSTODY; SEEDS OF DISSENSION AMONG THE MARATHAS.

The news of Rajaram's death was received in the Moghul camp with great exultation. Shahu heard it, however, with heart-felt grief which produced a baneful effect on his mind and body. He had a protracted fever which gave rise to serious anxiety in the minds of the Begum and Yesubai. Even the old Emperor felt uneasy, when he heard of the serious illness of Shahu. Aurangzeb paid a visit to Shahu and sat by his bedside for a long time, trying to console the Prince and assuring him that he would be restored to his Raj, as he (Shahu) was regarded as a son by the Begum (Aurangzeb's daughter) and as he was an honest person (सव* of which Shahu became a corruption).

After Shahu's recovery, the Begum began to think seriously of his marriage, as he had attained his 18th year. She broached the subject to her father (the Emperor) and with his consent Jyotaji Keskar and Moropant Subnis were deputed to find out befitting brides of high family worthy of the match. The brides selected were Ambikabai,

* Shahu had to pay a very heavy price indeed for his release and restoration to his Raj by taking a solemn oath of allegiance to the Moghul power. This was the main impediment to the Peshwas, as we have observed elsewhere, in accomplishing the aim of Hindupad-Padshahi. This oath of allegiance prevented Shahu from consenting to sit on the imperial throne at Delhi, though Baji Rao's ambition inclined towards that goal. More on this point is unnecessary at this stage.

daughter of Rustomrao Jadhav, and Savitrabai, daughter of the Sindhias of Kanheirkhed.

The Begum prevailed upon Aurangzeb to celebrate the marriage with due pomp and ceremony. Money was spent lavishly for that purpose and the Emperor took much interest in the matter, the credit of all this being of course due to the genuine zeal and affection of the noble-hearted Begum,* who insisted that the ceremony should be performed in a manner worthy of the "Kings of the Marathas," and her son, whom she had reared up with so much care and devotion. After the marriage Shahu received Sanads for the five Parganas of Akalkote, Indapur, Supa, Baramati, and Nevase from the Emperor. Aurangzeb was also pleased to confer one gold-hilted sword, the Bhavani sword of Shivaji, and the sword of Afzulkhan on the newly married Maratha Prince, whose discreet demeanour gave great exultation even to the bigoted Emperor.†

* There is a very interesting incident after the marriage. The old Emperor called Shahu and his wives to his presence and gave them his sincere blessings. Through the joint efforts and skilful plan of the Begum and Yesubai, one of the maid-servants of good looks was dressed as a bride, as the real bride, according to Maratha custom, could not be taken to the presence of the Emperor. Shahu and the said maid-servant were sent to the presence of the Emperor. Shahu, ever afterwards became very fond of this maid-servant and always kept her with him.

† Shahu ever remained grateful to the Begum and to Aurangzeb and under intensely adverse circumstances he so conducted himself as to allow no feelings of jealousy to rise in the mind of Aurangzeb, the inveterate foe of the Marathas. We shall see later on that the extension of the Maratha

We have already taken note of Aurangzeb's untiring exertions (*vide* Introduction) during his Deccan campaign, on which he had started at the advanced age of 65. During this campaign, extending over seventeen years, he obtained alternate victories and reverses, which proved ultimately abortive and gained no lasting benefits for his Empire or for his mind. The last victory he obtained was at Wakin kheda in Karnatik.* Thence he repaired to Ahmednagar, molested by the Marathas and in an utterly hopeless condition of mind, (*vide* the Introduction). Ahmednagar, the very place whence he undertook the operations against the Marathas, was to be his final resting place. He received retributive justice at the hands of nature and died at Ahmednagar in 1707 A. D. in a state of mind which is well described in the Introduction. He had had three sons, Moazim,† Azimshah

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Empire was a work which Shahu was prevailed upon to undertake only after a great many efforts on the part of Baji Rao I.

* In the Introduction we have referred to this matter and pointed out briefly how the Marathas were uncontrollable and how the Emperor was in total despair.

† Moazim was otherwise known by the name of Bahadurshah. A contest for the throne ensued between him and Azimshah, the latter being defeated and slain in the battle near Dholepore (1707). Bahadurshah ascended the throne at Delhi in 1708. Kambaksh, younger brother of the new Emperor, would not agree to recognize the claim of Bahadurshah to the throne. All attempts at a compromise having fallen through, an appeal to arms was the only alternative remaining. The Emperor, Bahadurshah, aided by the wise counsels of Zulfikar Khan led an expedition against Kambaksh. The two brothers met in the field of battle near Hyderabad (Deccan) where Kambaksh suffered defeat and was slain on the battlefield.

and Kambaksha, of whom the eldest succeeded Aurangzeb after defeating his brothers, Azimshah and Kambaksha.

Prior to Azimshah's departure from the Deccan to contest the throne at Delhi, he thought of releasing Shahu from the Moghul custody on conditions of acknowledging the Moghul suzerainty and taking measures to allow no disturbances in the Imperial territories. Shahu, most possibly, accepted the conditions on the remonstrance of the kind-hearted Begum who was extremely eager to see her son (Shahu) released from the custody.*

The Begum, though grieved to part with Shahu, whom she had brought up with the affection and devotion of a mother, advised him to lose no time in availing himself of the terms proposed by Azimshah and to leave for the Deccan at once. The Begum further assured Shahu that she would concert measures very soon to send Yesubai and the other members of his family to the Deccan. The advice was timely and Shahu obeyed it literally.

Leaving Jotyaji Keskar to take the letters to the Scobhas promised by Azimshah, Shahu promptly left the Moghul camp accompanied by Moropant Subnis, Krishnaji Naik Joshee, Gadadharbhat, and

* The affectionate relations between this Begum and her Dharma-Putra (son recognised by pious inclination of the mind) are indeed romantic. Probably there are few instances in History of this kind. Aurangzeb, the inveterate enemy of the Marathas, and his daughter the unswerving protector and benefactor of the king of the Marathas! Inscrutable and unknown are indeed the ways of Providence!

the favourite maid-servant Virubai* and attended by an escort of 200 horses, elephants etc. which Azimshah ordered for the safety as well as dignity of Shahu, who had also the imperial permission to raise an army as suited his convenience.

* Yesubai, mother of Shahu and his two wives remained in the Moghul camp under the fostering care of the Begum Sahiba.

CHAPTER III

RETURN TO THE DECCAN AND CORONATION

Shahu lost no time in fully availing himself of the opportunity to leave the Moghul custody with the cordial consent of the Begum and Zulfikar Khan,* both of whom advised him to expedite his departure for the Deccan to assert his claim to the Maratha Raj. The Princes of Bharatpore, Jodhpur, Udeipur and Jaipur, received him with warm hospitality on his way to the South. He visited the sacred city of Ujjain and paid his obeisance to Shri Mahankaleshwar, and arrived at Burhanpur by the route of Maheshwar. Jotyaji Keskar was awaiting his master at Burhanpur with the Imperial letters. The Zamindars and Thakores on the route from Delhi to the Deccan received Shahu with much warmth and made his journey comfortable. The Marathas were rejoiced beyond measure to hear that their legitimate king was coming to rule over them. The nearer he approached the Maratha country, the larger became Shahu's following and many a Maratha Sirdar joined him and hailed his

* Azimshah and Zulfikar Khan thought that there would be internecine feuds between Tarabai's party and Shahu and thus there would be some breathing time for the Moghuls. The parting scene was extremely affecting when the good Begum gave her blessings to Shahu at the time of his departure. She could not bear the separation from Shahu and at the same time she could not prevent him from going to the Deccan to obtain the kingship of the Marathas. So there was a struggle between the Begum's feelings of affection on the one part and her sense of duty in securing the Mansab for her son Shahu on the other.

advent.* After crossing the sacred river Godavari, Shahu wrote to Tarabai about his intention of taking over the management of the Raj.†

Shahu's letter to Tarabai was instrumental in rousing the worst feelings of feminine jealousy, wrath and vindictiveness. She called her ministers and advisers and vehemently protested that Shahu had no legitimate claim to the Raj. Tarabai went even to the length of asserting that there was no real Shahu and the person coming forward under his name was a pretender.‡

Intelligence of all the machinations of Tarabai reached Shahu who was extremely grieved to find this subterranean danger to his cause assuming such a serious aspect. Little did Shahu dream that this opposition from Tarabai was to have such an overwhelming force. But love of power and

* Parsoji Bhonsle who had a force of 15,000 at his command, joined Shahu. Chinnaji Damodar who was in Khandedesh with an army of 5,000 under him, also joined Shahu.

† Shahu's conciliatory measures won over the hearts of several powerful Maratha Sirdars who joined his standard. He conferred titles on some and jagheers on others and thus confirmed their good-will towards him. Hyabtrao Nimbalkar, Neeraji Sindhia, Sayaji Bhonsle and others came to him with their forces and offered their allegiance and aid to him. Thus his position strengthened day by day and his hopes brightened, though a danger lurked in the near future and was surmounted with great difficulty.

‡ The history of this disastrous period in the Annals of Maharashtra is very much to be deplored. Professor Sinha gives a graphic account of this Civil War, while appreciating the worth and the work of the Peshwas, *vide Journal of Indian History*, April, 1928.

authority are capable of producing still worse scenes! Shahu faced the calamity in a calm and resolute way, quietly using his endeavours to avert the storm. He determined to remain in camp in the vicinity of the Godavari. Preparations for a struggle for power began energetically on both sides. Angre took "Bel Bhandar" to support Tarabai. The Pratinidhi (Parsharam Trimbak) did the same. The gallant Dhanaji Jadhav, however, took a conditional oath to help Tarabai's cause. In fact, the brave Jadhav's action seems judicious when the circumstances were so perplexing and serious. The Pratinidhi and Jadhav advanced to oppose Shahu who thought it convenient to move his camp to Khed Kudus, about 24 miles from Poona. While on his march from Poona to Khed Kudus, Shahu encountered a little resistance from the town of Parad* which had a small fortress, from which a feeble cannonade was directed upon his forces. The fortress was stormed, taken and levelled to the ground and the besieged were put to the sword.

When Shahu heard that the Pratinidhi and Dhanaji Jadhav were approaching Khed Kudus to give him battle, he wisely resolved to desist from taking the offensive and allowed some time to pass, during which he endeavoured to win over Dhanaji Jadhav—a measure which was as timely as it was

* The founder of the Akalkote Raj was a child who was thrown at Shahu's feet by its mother, at Parad after his victory there. The child was named Fatesing Bhonsle in honour of the auspicious victory which signalised Shahu's advance to face the invading forces.

sound.* He went one night to the camp of Jadhav in disguise and had an interview with Naroram Ranga Rao, a Saraswat Brahmin, who had much influence with his master. Naroram Ranga Rao was Jadhav's comptroller of the household and as such had frequent opportunities to influence his master's views. Naroram represented to Dhanaji Jadhav the legitimacy of Shahu's claims to the Raj and persuaded him to espouse the right cause at the right time. Jadhav accepted the propriety of his comptroller's proposal, being convinced of Shahu's claim to the sovereignty. But the oath he had taken† was to be observed. Jadhav, therefore, satisfied the scruples of his conscience by having a nominal skirmish with Shahu's forces. After the skirmish Dhanaji Jadhav joined Shahu with his whole force. The Pratinidhi, however, had begun the battle in real earnest, but when he saw that the valiant Jadhav and his whole force had gone over to Shahu the confounded Pratinidhi, thinking that discretion was the better part of valour, fled from the field and returned to Satara.

In this peaceful way, Shahu gained a powerful accession of strength to his party by the sagacious conduct of the brave Dhanaji Jadhav who was appointed Senapati (Commander-in-Chief) of the forces—an honour which Jadhav rightly deserved. Khando Ballal was appointed to the post of

* The battle of Khed, a nominal affair, was sufficient for Jadhav to escape honourably from the oath to Tarabai.

† Jadhav had, as mentioned already, taken a conditional oath in these terms:—

“जिवांत जीव बाहे तोंपर्यंत एकदा हाहू महाराजांचरोबर कडाई करीव.”—*Kavyatithas Sangraha*.

Chitnis. Naroram Ranga Rao Shenwee had done a timely service which was appreciated by his nomination as Mantri with a substantial annuity. Thus by his calm wisdom and mild manners, Shahu won the day at Khed Kudas, whence he proceeded to pay his homage to Shree Khandoba at Jejuri after making a short halt at Poona. At Jejuri he remained for some time to perform the religious duties enjoined by custom. He wrote letters to Shankarji Narayan Sachiva and Dattaji Shivdev Rajadnya. The Sachiva paid no heed to the letter. Dattaji Shivdev, however, offered his allegiance to Shahu by whom, when, he presented himself, he was received with due honour.

After taking some rest in the holy town of Jejuri, Shahu went to Veer to pay his respects to a famous saint who resided there. Thence he proceeded to Dahigaon near Chundun Wundun. The fort of Chundun Wundun was taken and letters were addressed to Shaikh Mira, Prayagji Prabhu, Parsharam Trimbak Pratinidhi and others at Satara, inviting them to an interview, but the letters were disregarded, preparations being made by them to offer resistance to Shahu, who rose to the occasion by putting immediately the members of their families into custody and sending a message to them that if they did not surrender with the fort of Satara, their family members would be put to the sword. The besieged in the Satara fort represented to the Pratinidhi the propriety of giving up the fort and submitting to Shahu, but the Pratinidhi was deaf to all these wise counsels and bent on offering resistance. Prayagji Prabhu and Sheikh Mira resolved to open secret negotiations

with Shahu and thus to leave the Pratinidhi in the lurch. They informed Shahu that he should storm the fort of Satara on seeing a particular signal from the fort of Wundun, where Shahu placed his men for that purpose. As soon as the signal was observed by Shahu's men in the Wundun fort, Satara was attacked and taken without any opposition. Prayagji Prabhu, Sheikh Mira and others paid their respects to Shahu who received them duly and conferred on them substantial grants. The ill-fated Pratinidhi, Parsharam Trimbak was put to disgrace and placed in confinement under a strict watch, Gadadhar Pralhad being nominated in his place as Pratinidhi. Bahiropant Pingle was made Peshwa. Shahu's good luck thus began to shine brightly and his power began to take firm root slowly but steadily. The forts of Parli, Wardhangad, and Mahimangad, were taken shortly after this. As the prospects began to become favourable, Shahu thought it proper to ascend the throne with due formalities and proper ceremony in the March of 1708 A. D. at Satara. The exultation of Shahu's party must have been unbounded, indeed, when they saw him crowned as the sovereign of the Marathas. Who could have thought that such a joyful end was to be in store for him when his father was decapitated and he was taken into Moghul custody with his mother Yesubai? The Eternal art, however, educed good from the dire evil.

After his coronation at Satara, Shahu began to look after the administration with the help of his Ashtapradhanas (cabinet ministers) viz:—

1 Bahiropant Pingle—Peshwa.

- 2 Gadadhar Pralhad—Pratinidhi.
- 3 Dhanaji Jadhav—Senapati.
- 4 Naroram Rangrao—Mantri.

The party of Tarabai was still busy brooding over plans of mutual destruction, being sure of help from Vazir Moneen Khan. Shahu's party was backed by Zulfikar Khan who had much influence with the Emperor, Bahadur Shah.* These feuds between Shahu and Tarabai led to very bad consequences to the prosperity of the Rayat at large and especially to the class of the cultivators of the soil. The frequent appeals to arms and the general anarchy that ensued was such as to reduce the peasantry to a very poor condition. A country like Maharashtra, the main prop of which was agriculture, was, therefore, in a very unsatisfactory condition. In order to counteract the evil, it was necessary to improve the cultivation of the land and the condition of the cultivators. Shahu entrusted this important work to Dhanaji Jadhav who was fortunate to have two able hands at his disposal for the improvement of the land revenue system. Dhanaji Jadhav appointed Balaji Vishwanath † and Ambaji Purandare to look after the land

* Bahadur Shah returned to Delhi in 1708 from the Deccan after defeating Kambaksha. Zulfikar Khan was his counsellor and could not be spared to remain in the Deccan. The Emperor nominated Dawood Khan Pannee as his Deputy and sent him to look after the Subbedari of the Deccan. Of course, Dawood Khan Pannee was guided by the advice of Zulfikar Khan who was friendly disposed to Shahu.

† Balaji Vishwanath appears to have held the post of Sir Subbedar of Poona and Daulatabad provinces in 1702 and 1704 A. D. respectively. The following extract is interesting in this connection :—

revenue system. Both of them were under Dhanaji Jadhav and competent for the work that was given them by their master, as both of them were Deshmukh and Kulkarni, and as such possessed of much experience of the work. The genius of Balaji Vishwanath* shone very brightly and his star was in the ascendant. In a short time, Balaji won the favour and the high opinion of his master Dhanaji Jadhav who frequently and freely praised

[continued from page 52]

“सन १६९९ च्या दरम्यान शाहू व त्याची आई येसूबाई यांची वेळोवेळून योग्य व्यवस्था ठेवण्यांत पुण्याचा सर सुनेदार बाळाजी विश्वनाथ यानें पुष्कळ बटपट केले, असा एक वलेख आहे. त्यावेळी शाहूला बाळाजीची माहिती तो औरंगजेबाच्या कैदेत असल्यापासूनच असली पाहिजे....सामान्य प्रवाद असा आहे की बाळाजी हा कोंकणातून आलेला यशस्वीत कारकून असून त्यास दैवयोगाने एकदम मोठे भाग्य प्राप्त झाले. साम्राज्य चढलेल्या मनुष्याची पूर्वस्थिती असल्यास ती विरोध फुगवून सांगण्याकडे बहुधा बखरकारांचा कळ असतो. ग्रँट बफच्या देष्टानें असा गैरसमज उत्पन्न झाला असावा. पेशव्यांच्या संबंधानें ग्रँट बफची जादरबुद्धि नाहीं. ज्यांचे राज्य आपण घेतले, त्यांची नावाजणी करणाऱ्यां औदार्य मनुष्य स्वभावांत सहसा नसतें.”— *Rajawade and Sardesai*, p. 25.

* Balaji Vishwanath was a Sir Subbedar and as such his knowledge of revenue affairs must have been considerable. Even before his rise to the Peshwaship Balaji was actively exerting himself in the interests of Shahu's party and had given much help in securing good terms for Yesubai, Shahu's mother. The general belief, as is well pointed out by us elsewhere, that Shahu raised Balaji at once to the Peshwaship is not correct. Long before that time Balaji was known to Yesubai and Shahu and his zealous exertions for them must have influenced Shahu's good opinion about Balaji. The future conduct of Shahu as well as of Balaji had their origin in old and cordial relations which were strengthened by the sound work done by Balaji Vishwanath.

Balaji and his excellent work in the presence of the Chatrapati Shahu. In this way, it became easy for Balaji Vishwanath to rise high in the Chatrapati's estimation through the recommendation of Dhanaji Jadhav.

CHAPTER IV

INFLUENCE OF SAINTS

The influence of Shree Brahmendra Swami and his contemporary Shri Narayan Dixit on the careers of the hero of this narrative and several other Maratha personages is remarkable and deserves a careful attention from the student of Maratha History. Chhatrapati Shahu was greatly influenced by the wave of saintly exertions for Swadharma and Swaraja. What Shree Ramdas Swami was to the illustrious Shivaji, Shree Brahmendra Swami and Shree Narayan Dixit were to the Chhatrapati Shahu and Peshwas Balaji Vishwanath and Baji Rao I. The subject of this Biography and his Ranees Saganabai and Sakawarbai had the highest reverence for these famous saints. Our readers would be delighted to know something regarding the direct and indirect influence which they exercised on the political atmosphere of Maharashtra in those days of national prostration and general transition.

Brahmendra Swami was born about the year 1649 A. D. at Dudhewadi near Rajori (well-known owing to its connection with the deity Ganapati) in Berar. His name was Vishnu. His parents Mahadeo Bhat and Umabai died when he was only twelve years of age. From his earlier years, he had a propensity for prayers and penance. The Deity Ganapati was pleased with his devotion and enjoined him in a dream to desist from hard penance, blessing him at the same time that he would be a great and revered personage. He travelled far

and wide in India and stayed for a long time in Benares where he was initiated into the highest problems of Vedantism by the famous saint Dnyanendra Saraswati. After finishing his pilgrimage he came to the Satara District about the year 1680 and thence to the village Pedhe near Chiplun, now in the Ratnagiri district. Here Balaji Vishwanath Bhat of Shriwardhan met him. About the year 1698 he publicly settled at the Parasharam Temple which he resolved to rebuild on a grand scale. Thereafter circumstances led him to remove to Dhawadshi near Satara. He blessed Shahu and supported Baji Rao I in his succession to the Peshwaship. The Pratinidhi also received the Swami's potent aid. The following extracts would show how Chhatrapati Shahu and the Peshwa Balaji Vishwanath were blessed with the spiritual help of this saint:—

(a) "....वेन्हां शाहु महाराजांस चंदन वंदन किन्हे हस्तगत करून देवेच प्रतिपक्षाशीं झुंजत कांहीं विस राहावें जाणवें. हें वर्तमान स्वामीस कळतांच स्वामींनीं जाणवें कटिसूत्र व कौपीन शाहु महाराजांस प्रसाद म्हणून पाठविली, व त्यांना, "तूं यशस्वी होऊन राज्यासम करशील" असा आशिर्वाद दिला. स्वामी मणवळूर, तपस्वी, बरवी, महापुरुष. त्यांचा प्रसाद आपणांस कल्याणकर असें समजून, शाहु महाराजांनीं तो मोठ्या मनीनें ग्रहण केव्य. तो उचकरच शाहु महाराजांचा विजय प्राप्त होऊन सातत्याची गादी मिळाली...." *Swami's Life* by Parasnis p. 8.

(b) The Swami was extremely kind to Balaji Vishwanath as is evident from his letter to Chima-ji Appa, in which the following graceful reference is made about Balaji Vishwanath:—

"..... नाब (Balaji Vishwanath) मज्जा होता. तो एकनिष्ठ होता. सम्यक्चा सत्ता झाला त्यामुळे इतके अमिष्ट झाले.

शिरीची मसकत घुलू जाली. " Shrinivas Parsharam Pratinidhi gave two villages, Dorle and Mahalunge, in 1720, to the Swami's Sansthan as Inam. Even the Sidhi Chief, Yakudkhan of Janjira, had the highest reverence for this Swami, on whom the said Chief bestowed two villages, Pedhe and Amsus in Jagheer for the upkeep of the Sansthan of Shree Parsharam at Chiplun.

The Swami's exertions for saving the Hindus from the proselytising inroads of the Portuguese in and about Vasai (Bassein) are worthy of being noticed. (*Vide* pp. 62-86 of the *Swami's Life* by Parasnis). Brahmendra Swami, along with Narayan Dixit, heartily enjoined the extension of Maratha conquest and the protection of the Hindus from the oppression of the Portuguese particularly and of the Moghuls generally.

Some details about the well-known saint Narayan Dixit Patankar, contemporary of Brahmendra Swami would be quite appropriate in this work. He came from the Konkan and performed great penances at Paithan. He was deeply versed in Sanskrit and travelled widely throughout India. His fame as a saint attracted first the attention of Balaji Vishwanath and then of the Chhatrapati Shahu, both of whom received his hearty blessings. Narayan Dixit remained mostly in Benares, where there still exists, the Dixitpura. The corner of this saint's magnificent house is still worshiped by devout Hindus. An anecdote is still extant regarding the Goddess Annapurna cooking food at his house when he gave a dinner to some thousands of pilgrims to the holy city. How this saint insisted on and encouraged Maratha

conquest would be known from the following extract:—

“...नारायण दिक्षितानें बाजीरावाबद्दल मयुरेसंमिच घमंक्रुत्यास बहा गांव माहितके, बाबा अर्थ बाजीरावानें तो प्रांत जिंकण्याचा उद्योग करावा असा दीक्षितांचा उद्देश होता. त्या वेळच्या लौकिक मावना कशा प्रकारच्या होत्या हे यावरून दगोचर होतें...”—Sardesai's *Panipat Prakarana* p. 298. He was highly esteemed by the Chhatrapati, the Peshwas and the Emperor of Delhi.*

We conclude this chapter by reproducing two original letters testifying to the powerful influence of these two worthy saints—one is from Baji Rao to Shree Brahmendra Swami and the other from Balaji Baji Rao to saint Vasudeo Dixit.

(a) To saint Brahmendra Swami from the Peshwa Baji Rao:—

श्रीमत् राजाश्री परमहंसबाबा स्वामींचे सेवेची:—आपलें बाजीराव बाळक प्रबोध कृतानेक विज्ञापना येथील कुशल आशात छुद्द अष्टमीपर्यंत स्वामींचे आशीर्वादेंकरून यथास्थित असो विशेष. स्वामींचे आशीर्वादेंकरून पत्र पाठविलें तें उत्तम समयी प्रविष्ट होऊन लेखनाधीश्रवणें संतोषातिशय झाल्य. “राजाश्री स्वामी धावबशीस येऊन निघपुरस्सर कित्येक मावण केलें; पांच नोवतन दिलें, विठ्ठलाव याचा इनाम दूर करून दरोबस्त गांव करून स्वदस्तुरें छिन्न दिलें” म्हणोन स्वामींनी कितेक छिहिलें त्यावरून बहुत बहुत संतोष जाहल्य. स्वामी शेर तपस्वी, ईश्वर विभूति, आपली आज्ञा अमाव्यकरीसा या बोम्ब कोण आहे ! ईश्वर कोणी पाहिला असे ! मनुष्य निष्ठा बरीच तरी मृत्यु-छोकी स्वामी ईश्वरतुल्य आहेत. आपणांस गांव दरोबस्त करून दिलें नावें

*The anecdote about Narayan Dixit's meeting with Aurangzeb is very interesting.

अपूर्व काय ! सर्व जाहा आपलीच आहे. “राजश्रीजवळ तुमची फारशी शिफारस केली. कितीक तुमच्या स्वहिताच्या गोष्टी सांगितल्या” म्हणोन आहा, ऐबीबाब स्वामी आमची शिफारस न करील तरी कोण करील ! मागवाप देव जमी सर्व स्वामीचे पाय, न्यूनपूर्ण सर्व स्वामीचे, आम्ही स्वामीचे करणंकिंत, सर्व विंता स्वामीस आहे. तेथे आमची शिफारस व बऱ्याच्या गोष्टी सांगितल्याचें अपूर्व काय ! आमची निष्ठ स्वामीच्या पादापासी आहे; तेथे विस्तार आम्ही काय लिहावा !

(b) To Saint Vasudeo Dixit, son of saint Narayan Dixit from the Peshwa Balaji Baji Rao:—

॥ श्री ॥

“वेदशास्त्र संपन्न राजश्री बासुदेव दीक्षित स्वामीचे सेवेसी:—

विद्यार्थी बाळजी बाजीराव प्रधान नमस्कार विनंति, उपरी येथील कुशल आणोन स्वकीय लिहित गेलें पाहिजे. विशेष दिव्नीकडील वर्तमान, चिरंजीव राजश्री रघुनाथराव व होळकर बगैरे सरदार फौजेसह दिव्नीत घुसरूप पोहोंकले. वेदशास्त्र संपन्न महाराज राजश्री बाळकृष्ण दीक्षिताबाबा यांची स्वारी दिव्नीस आली आहे. त्यांचा बादशाहाचें दरबारांत भान मराठम पूर्वापार आपले बराण्याचे योग्यतेनुकम राहण्याची तजवीज राहावी म्हणून निजामन मुल्दस असफजहां, यांस तेथून लिहिलें होतें. चिरंजीव यांनींही, दोन मुकाम अथोवर, दीक्षितांची स्वारी आली आहे म्हणून बादशाहास सूचना केली होती. त्यावरून योग्य तरतूद झाली, व याबद्दल नबाब निजामन मुल्दस असफजहांचें पत्र मजकबेस आले. त्यांत ते लिहितात की, “दीक्षित महाराजांस दिव्नी शहरांत आणण्याकरितां लवाजम्यासह पेशवाईस जाऊन आणणेंबद्दल बादशाहाचा मला हुकूम झाला आहे, त्याप्रमाणें आदरपूर्वक सन्मानाचें शहरांत आणिलें. बादशाहाचे मेटोचे दिव्नी, वर लिहिल्याप्रमाणें मोठे सन्मानानें शहरांत आणिलें. बाद् बादशाहा दरबाज्यापर्यंत सामोरे येऊन हात धरून नेऊन बसविलें. फार सत्कार ठेविला. बादशाहा दीक्षितांसी बोलले की, “राजा शाहूचे जे गुरू व बोरले दीक्षित महाराजांचा पूर्ण आशीर्वाद औरंगजेब बादशाहावर झाल्य असून आपलेच आशीर्वादानें या बादशाहाईची उर्जात दसा आहे. आपले बडील पैगंबराप्रमाणें होऊन गेले. तीच योग्यता आपली आहे, तेव्हां

आपण येथे येऊन दर्शन दिल्यामुळे आम्ही आज कृतार्थ झालो." बघैरे मक्ति-पूर्वक भाषणे करून पदरुच गौरव केला. चोरळे नारायण विद्वितभारार्वाभ्यास सन्मान ठेविला. नंतर पंधरा हजारोंचा गांव जहागीर देऊन फत्तमाच करून दिले व पोसाक, पालखी, मोरचेल वबरी, जवाहीर वगैरे स्विकृत दिली. नबावांनी लिहिले: " वीक्षितास जहागीरच कम ! त्यांचे पुत्र्य बलवत्तर. त्यास ईश्वराची कृपा व आपण त्यांचे शिष्य, तेव्हां त्यांस काय कमी आहे ! परंतु रयासतीचें व आम्ही कृतार्थ व्हावें ह्या करितां यत्किंचित् सेवा केली." वाप्रमाणे पत्र आले, दीक्षित स्वकरच काशीस जातील, शरीरें करून झेप आहेत, काळजी नसावी. वरचेवर पत्र येत अस्यवें."

CHAPTER V

CHHATRAPATI SHAHU AND TARABAI

The dissensions between these two branches of the family of the Great Shivaji assumed very unpleasant aspects. The gravity of the evil was considerably aggravated by the support which Tarabai's party received from the Moghul power. Probably it was an off-shoot of the wretched policy of "Divide and Rule". We have referred to the working of this policy in the Introduction.

Tarabai and her advisers, Ramchandrapant Amatya and Shankar Narayan Sachiva were ceaselessly active. Shahu had taken the forts of Vasantgarh, Panhala and Pavangarh in 1709 and the fort of Rangna was besieged. A serious accident, however, came in the way of the cession of Rangna fort. Through the efforts of Khando Ballal Chitnis and Sheikh Mira, the calamity to Shahu's life was effectively averted. Shahu postponed the attack and returned to Kolhapur for cantonment during the monsoon. At no distant date Shahu had the misfortune to lose the aid and advice of the gallant Dhanaji Jadhav who, owing to old age and constant life in camp, was in very indifferent health. An old wound, which was very troublesome, brought on additional complications and weakness, which ultimately proved fatal. The brave Dhanaji Jadhav died at Wadgaon on the bank of the river Warna in 1710, while on his way

to Satara. It is but due to this great soldier to say that he was a mighty pillar of the State of Shahu.

Shahu conferred the honour of Senapati on Chandrasen Jadhav, the son of the great soldier. Shahu, however, did not entrust the important work of the Land Revenue Department to Chandrasen Jadhav but gave that work to Balaji Vishwanath. Chandrasen Jadhav, however, resented greatly his deprivation of this office.*

About this time, Tarabai returned from Malvan and succeeded in re-taking the fort of Panhala by bribing the Kiledar. Under the advice of Shankarji Narayan Sachiva, she made Kolhapur her capital. Shahu's army took the Sachiv's fort of Rajgad—a measure which filled the Sachiva with great fear. He manned his other forts very effectively and was ready for any emergency, but the scruples of his conscience were too much for him. On the one hand, he was bound by oath to Tarabai; on the other lay the sin of fighting against his legitimate master, Shahu. The God-fearing Sachiva averted both evils by becoming a Sanyasi and ending his life at the sacred place of Nagteertha at Ambawade in 1711. The disappearance of the Sachiva from the scene of action was a great blow to Tarabai. Shahu availed himself of this opportunity by recognizing the late Sachiva's son, Naro Shankar, as successor to the office and sending him a dress of honour as a sign of formal nomination.† Tarabai met with another

* This led to inveterate enmity between Chandrasen Jadhav and Balaji Vishwanath.

† This was a masterpiece of benevolent policy which stood Shahu in good stead.

and greater disaster, which took place at no distant date. Tarabai's son Shivaji died of small-pox in the January of 1712 A. D. and her counsellor, Ramchandrapant Amatya, placed Sambhaji, son of Rajasbai, on the Mansad and began to look after the administration of the state affairs himself after putting Tarabai and her son's widow Bhavanibai* (who was then pregnant) into custody. Thus did Tarabai's star set by reason of the machinations of her faithless Amatya ! Of Rajasbai and her son Sambhaji nothing more is required to be said for some time.† The Pratinidhi's eldest son Krishnaji joined the party of Sambhaji at Kolhapur, though his father Parsharam Trimbak was restored to his position by the generosity of Shahu. But this circumstance did not hinder the path of Shahu's advancement and prestige, which suffered no abatement by the evil machinations of the Kolhapur ‡ party whom Shahu later on treated with great clemency.

* Bhavani Bai gave birth to a son who was named Rajaram. He succeeded Shahu later on. Rajasbai had resolved to put a period to the life of this child. But Tarabai succeeded in saving his life by a skilful expedient. She gave out that the child had died, while she secretly arranged through Bhagwantrao Ramchandra that the child should be carried safely to his house at Bawada where he was to be secretly brought up.

† The foundation of a separate State at Kolhapur had already been laid. Through the generosity and kindhearted nature of Shahu, a treaty was later on concluded and in spite of Nizam-ul-Mulk's intrigues, Shahu's star shone brighter as will be evident from a perusal of the coming pages.

‡ Shahu was never vindictive in his nature. Although the intriguers had tried, through greed, to make the confusion worst confounded, yet Shahu forgot and forgave the sad

We must now turn to the turbulent scenes in the Imperial city of Delhi, where a series of revolutions had taken place and the political wheel had been turning with extraordinary speed. Bahadur Shah died in the February of 1712 A. D. Jehandar Shah was able to succeed him through Zulfikar Khan's aid. The new Shah signalized the beginning of his regime by cruelly assassinating his brothers and rivals to the throne.* As this Shah was incompetent, naturally power went into the hands of the Vazier Zulfikar Khan and produced an inebriating effect on him. The Shah's Durbar† became a scene of low favourites, worthless flatterers and unscrupulous adventurers. Jahandar Shah was, however, unable for long to enjoy the fruits of his sinful prosperity and rise to power. Hussain Ali, the Subhedar of Behar and Abdul Ali, the Subhedar of Allahabad had lent their aid to Farukseer's claim to the throne. With this potent force to back him, Farukseer assembled a large army at Agra, where Jahandar Shah and Zulfikar Khan proceeded with an army seventy

[continued from page 63.]

affair and made friendly relations with Sambhaji and wisely poured oil on troubled waters. The Nizam Asaf Jah had found a good tool in the party of Shambhaji to foment internecine feuds, which ultimately were stopped by the victory of Baji Rao's arms at Palkhed in 1728.

* Farukseer, son of the Shah's younger brother Azeemushah, escaped the murderer's hands by his absence from Delhi. He was in Bengal with Hussain Ali, whose protection Farukseer sought after his father Azeemushah was killed. Hussain Ali's elder brothers Abdul Ali was subedar of Allahabad. Both the Ali Brothers espoused the cause of Farukseer.

† The description of Jehandershah's Durbar is interesting though somewhat disgusting.

thousand strong to give battle to the claimant to the Imperial throne. Fate smiled favourably on the rival Farukseer who won the day in the battle. Poor Jahandar Shah had no other alternative but to take to his heels! The dejected Shah fled to Delhi in disguise and went to the house of Asad Khan, father of the Vazir Zulfikar Khan. The old man (Asad Khan) betrayed the helpless Shah in order to secure his own safety! Farukseer entered Delhi with all the pomp and circumstance of a victorious Shah, to whom Asad Khan and Zulfikar Khan presented the fallen emperor Jahandar Shah! The new Emperor spared the aged Asad Khan but his son Zulfikar Khan was killed in a cruel manner. Farukseer ascended the throne in the February of 1713 A. D. after putting Jahandar Shah to death. The new regime was predominated by the powerful influence of the Ali Brothers, Abdulla Ali being made the Vazeer and Hussain Ali the Commander-in-chief. Dawood Khan Panni was transferred to Guzerath from the Deccan, where Chinkilich Khan, the well known Nizam-ul-mulk, was sent as Subhedar.

These changes were more favourable to Sambhaji of Kolhapur, as the new Subhedar of the Deccan was bent on profiting by fomenting the dissensions between Shahu and Sambhaji. Chinkilich Khan after his advent into the Deccan, espoused the cause of Sambhaji of Kolhapur, and thereby the Chowth income of Shahu was much disturbed. Shahu sent Chandrasen Jadhav and Balaji Vishwanath to realize the Chowth amount. There was no good feeling between Jadhav and Balaji and a slight cause sufficed to bring about an open

rupture between them, leading to undesirable consequences. Shahu supported Balaji Vishwanath. Jadhav, highly incensed at the support given by Shahu to Balaji Vishwanath, left the service and went over to Chinkilich Khan along with Dhar Rao Prabhu, Kalambekar, Rambhaji Nimbalkar and Surjerao Ghatgay.* Chinkilich Khan received all of them with open arms and giving them large Jagheers and grants made use of them in his own interests and in his well planned machinations. Shahu had to face various troubles due to the influence of Chinkilich Khan, the ostensible supporter of Sambhaji of Kolhapur. The Deccan was a scene of lawlessness and anarchy, and leaders of much significance enhanced the confusion of the scene by their wild and unbridled misbehaviour. Shahu's conduct in tiding over the difficulties was sagacious and farsighted. Partly by force but mostly by his conciliatory and quiet measures, he faced the dangers and tried his best to evolve order out of the prevailing chaos. The two expeditions, one under Balaji Vishwanath, and the other under the Sachiva, that were sent against Damaji Thorat, a partizan of Sambhaji of Kolhapur, came to little good, as Balaji and the Sachiva met with a treacherous defeat and were put in custody, though Shahu got them released by payment of a heavy indemnity. Two more expeditions were sent by Shahu—one against the Angria under Bahiropant Pingle and the other against

* It is sad indeed to see Chaodrasen Jadhav and the other Maratha Sardars falling a victim to the temptations and nets spread by the Nizam-ul-mulk. It is indeed a pity that the son of Dhanaji Jadhav behaved in this way! But Shahu's good luck surmounted all these difficulties.

Krishnarao Khataokar under Balaji Vishwanath. Angre defeated Bahiropant Pingle and took him prisoner. Balaji Vishwanath was successful in his mission, as Krishnarao Khataokar was defeated near Aundh in a pitched battle* and sued for forgiveness. Shahu pardoned Krishnarao Khataokar who duly tendered his submission and was granted the villages of Khatao in Jagheer. Balaji's success in the campaign against Khataokar led to his being again sent on a much more important mission. Shahu sent Balaji with a force of twenty thousand against Angre who had even declared openly his audacious plan of invading Satara. Balaji was splendidly successful in the campaign against Angre who was prevailed upon by the skill and firmness of Balaji to submit to Shahu Chhatrapati. A treaty was concluded with the Angre† who was appointed by Shahu as admiral of the Maratha navy with the

* The Pratinidhi Parsharam Trimbak (who was in custody) had sent his second son Shripatrao with Balaji Vishwanath and had directed his son to fight hard and win the battle or die on the battlefield. Balaji praised Shreepat Rao's bravery and hard fight in the presence of Shahu who released the Pratinidhi from imprisonment and restored him to his former office in the April of 1713 on the recommendation and intercession of Balaji Vishwanath and Khando Ballal Chitnis.

(“परशराम त्रिंबकाची निवाळस जाल्ल्याची सारवमा ब्राह्मी, तेव्हा बाळाजी व संढोबा यांचे मध्यस्थीवरून शाहूने परशरामपंतांस सोडून पुन्हा प्रतिनिधीपद व बहुमान बरे दिले.”)

† By the terms of this treaty Kanhoji Angre was given 26 forts by Shahu in the Konkau districts. The Sidhi of Janjira and Angre met face to face hereafter and the Sidhi was forced to come to terms with Angre to whom Balaji Vishwanath had sent re-inforcements.

title of "Sir Khel." Angre abandoned the party of Sambhaji and restored all the territory taken by him that belonged to Shahu with the exception of Rajmachi. At this time Angre also released Bahiropanth Pingle and Nillo Ballal who had been kept in confinement since Pingle's defeat.

Balaji Vishwanath's memorable success in the campaigns against Khataokar and Angre paved the way for his rise to the highest rung in the ladder—the Peshwaship.* Shahu received him most cordially at Satara and conferred on him the dignity of Peshwaship on the 16th, November 1713 A. D. Such a man was badly needed at the helm of state affairs. The hour and the man came together. Balaji won the full confidence of Shahu by his glorious deeds. Shahu was fully convinced about Balaji's ability and said : "हे महात्मी, व फौजेचे व सुलतानाचे कामायोग्य, मर्दे माणूस."

* Slowly and gradually the Maratha power was gaining ground in spite of the chaotic confusion and internal dissensions. Balaji's genius shone to greater advantage when he had power to organize the system which held the Marathas together. The appointment of Balaji Vishwanath as Peshwa was made at Manjri while Shahu and Balaji were in camp. Khando Ballal Chitnis describes the Peshwa's competency in these terms : "कता ब्राह्मण पेशवाईस योग्य." (An able Brahmin fit for the Peshwaship). Great credit is due to Balaji for his success in bringing about amicable relations between Shahu and Angre. The History of the Angre family is so important that a separate volume must be devoted to that purpose. In this work nothing but a brief account can be given. Had Shahu and the Peshwa Balaji Bajirao, grandson of the present Peshwa, strengthened the Angres in the coming years, the Maratha cause would have been undoubtedly more powerful and successful.

Although the East India Company denounced him as a pirate, Kanhoji Angre deserves some detailed notice. Kanhoji Angre's father Tukoji was in the service of Shivaji and made his mark in the maritime affairs of the Maratha State. After a glorious service Tukoji Angre died in 1690. Kanhoji continued his father's good work and inflicted a defeat on the English fleet on the 17th of April 1717 and thus baffled the endeavours of Governor Boon of Bombay. He also rendered futile the endeavours of Admiral Mathews, (1721), in taking the fort of Colaba. In short, Kanhoji Angre baffled the ambitious scheme of the English on the Western coast of India. The following paragraphs will throw much light on this subject :

"... Kid Green and Evory are the names of some of the men who had terrorized the Indian Seas for years. The English pirate was the principal cause of the disastrous war which Child waged against the great Moghul. Evory was the most notorious rover of this day, and gave much trouble to his countrymen in India. Indeed, he seems to have gained such notoriety for enterprise and daring that the Lord Chief Justice of England offered a reward of £500 for his apprehension and the Company an additional 4,000 rupees. Evory, however, successfully evaded the authorities, though some of his confederates were hanged. Among native pirates Kanhoji Angria was undoubtedly the most famous. English, Dutch and Portuguese, each tried to lay him low, but they all had to acknowledge defeat. Angria was to the native craft what Kidd and Evory were to European vessels. During the first quarter of the 18th century he seems to have

defied the authorities in and around Bombay, and although he died in 1728, his piratical instincts were transmitted to his descendants who kept up his reputation till 1755, when Commodore Jones made short work of the race of Angrias."

"Stranmore's gravest offence did not consist in his scurrilous language, his drawing the knife and threatening the guard, even his breaking the Captain's sword or attempting to throw him overboard but in the statement that 'it was but a little way to Angria and a Black Flag.' This amounted to high treason, for Kanhoji Angra was, at that time the sworn enemy of the English, hostilities having been formally declared against him."

—*Bombay in the Making*
by Malbari, page 356.

"Kanhoji Angria's influence on the sea was unsurpassed, but even on land his name struck terror in many a staunch heart. There were also some other incidents, as we have seen, which invested these trials with almost sensational interest. The inhabitants of Bombay were greatly agitated over the affair and the court was obliged to adopt certain measures to restore order and confidence."

"The man who gave the English most trouble during the first quarter of the 18th century was Kanhoji Angria—the famous pirate. He occupied the same position among native pirates as did Kidd among European interlopers. He commanded very great influence at the time, and was in league with those whose loyalty to the authorities was

open to doubt. The Bombay Government had got an inkling of this, and were keeping a close watch over the movements of some of their most trusted servants, one of them being Rama Kamathi. Secret inquiries were instituted, till in the beginning of 1720 the matter came up for investigation."

—*Ibid.*, p. 330.

"Among the many qualities of this prince of pirates not the least was his proficiency in writing letters which combined sarcasm with dignity. For instance, two years after William Phipps succeeded Charles Boone, as governor of Bombay, Angria sent him a letter of congratulations. Phipps, after twitting him for the long delay, read a little homily regarding the drawbacks of war and the advantages of peace and trade."

Sambhaji, after Kanhoji's death, rendered good services to the Maratha state and gave much help to Chimnaji Appa in the siege of Wasai (Bassein). In short from Travancore to Bombay the Angres made their power felt on the Western Coast of India and their prowess as well as their services to the Maratha state have entitled their names to a glorious place in the history of India generally and the Maratha period particularly. We conclude this account of the Angres by observing that the apathy and the disregard shown by the Marathas in later time to their navy became a source of their weakness and produced fatal consequences.

Balaji Vishwanath had to undertake one more campaign accompanied by Mansingh More, the Senapaty and Hybatrao Nimbalkar, as Shahu

desired to release the Sachiva from the custody of Damaji Thorat. This was in 1715 A. D. Balaji was also requested by the Sachiva's mother (Yesubai) to accomplish her son's release in a skilful way, because there was a strong probability of the hard-hearted Damaji Thorat's attempting to put the Sachiva to death. Balaji, therefore, used diplomacy and conciliatory measures at first by sending Pilaji Jadhav, his trusted servant, to negotiate terms for the Sachiva's release, which the greedy Thorat agreed to effect on payment of a heavy ransom. Balaji paid the amount asked for to the Thorat and the Sachiva was, at last, set free. Force was now used by Balaji to curb the power and the wild spirit of the Thorat. A heavy fire was opened on the Thorat's fortress which was levelled to the dust in a short time. The obdurate-hearted Thorat was captured and brought under custody to Satara. The success of this mission was highly gratifying to Shahu as well as to the mother of the Sachiva*. Balaji Vishwanath's influence was naturally greatly augmented in the Shahu Chhatrapati's Durbar by his calm wisdom, patient industry, and faithful services.

By a peculiar turning of the political wheel at the Imperial Court of Farrukseer the cunning Chinkilich Khan was sent to Muradabad and Hussain Ali came to the Deccan as Subhedar† in 1716 A. D. This was a favourable sign for Shahu's prospects.

* Yesubai (the Sachiva's mother) gave the fort of Purandar and her rights in the Poona district to Balaji who, with Shahu's permission, accepted the offer.

† Chinkilich Khan was not on good terms with the Sayad Brothers. He strongly disliked the appointment of

Hussain Ali desired chiefly to have his own and his brothers's influence unimpaired at Delhi. Consequently, he had no intention of grappling seriously with the Marathas. Hussain Ali, taking the pros and the cons of the case into proper consideration, thought it wiser to have a treaty with Shahu, whom the Sayad desired to utilize in his schemes at Delhi. A treaty was, thus, concluded between the two parties. Shahu and Hussain Ali came to terms through Shankaraji Malhar, Vakeel of the Subhedar, who was sent to settle the details. The terms of the treaty were as follows:—

(1) That the Moghuls should hand over to Shahu all the conquered territory together with forts, which was under Shivaji.

(2) That the territory which the Marathas had lately conquered *viz.* Khandesh, Gondwan, Berar, Hyderabad, Carnatic and other districts as described in the list should be annexed to the Maratha kingdom.

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Hussain Ali to the Subhedarship of the Deccan. He left the Deccan and arrived at Delhi on the 13th June 1715, where he refrained from openly opposing the Sayad Brothers' interests or in fomenting the intrigues that were going on against them. The relations between the Emperor and the Sayad Abdulla were becoming more and more strained. Chinkilich Khan, Surbuland Khan and Ajeet Khan were invited to Delhi with their forces. This was distinctly a step towards the destruction of the power of the Sayads. Sayad Abdulla could foresee the coming danger and made haste, therefore, to call his brother Hussain Ali from the Deccan with a strong force. Under these circumstances, Hussain Ali was compelled to seek Shahu's aid and requested him for military help.

(3) That the Marathas should have the rights of Chowth and Sirdeshmukhi in the Moghul territory in the Deccan and for the privilege of Chowth, the Marathas should maintain a body of 15,000 horse for the Emperor's service and for Sirdeshmuki, the Marathas should guard against thefts and dacoities in the Moghul territory.

(4) That Shahu should not interfere in the affairs of Sambhaji of Kolhapur.

(5) That the Marathas should pay a tribute of ten lacs of rupees per year to the Emperor.

(6) That Shahu's mother, wives, and Sambhaji's illegitimate son Madan Sing, who were at Delhi under the Emperor's control, should be allowed to return to their home in the Deccan.

Hussein Ali agreed to all the terms of the treaty which was ratified in 1718. The Court of the Emperor Farruckseer would not, however, endorse the treaty agreed to by Hussain Ali, for whose destruction a net was spread by the machinations of the arch intriguer Chinklich Khan, Sadat Khan, Mahomed Ameen, and others. Hussain Ali came to the conclusion that nothing but an appeal to arms would settle the matter. He, therefore, requested Shahu to extend powerful military help to him at this time. Shahu readily complied with Hussain Ali's request by sending a large force under the command of Balaji Vishwanath and Khanderao Dabhade to help the Sayad brothers

at Delhi,* Hussain Ali stipulating to defray the expenses of the whole force from the date it crossed the Narbada until its return to the Deccan. Hussein Ali and his Maratha allies reached Delhi with the Maratha army. The Emperor's partisans attacked Hussein Ali, who was naturally incensed at the unprovoked aggressiveness and ordered his forces to enter the precincts of the palace and cut down the wretched partisans who had begun the offensive. The Emperor who had concealed himself in the Zanana, was dragged out and put to death secretly in 1719 A. D. The Sayad Brothers, the virtual king makers, then raised Rafi Uddarjat and Rafi-Ud-Dowlah to the throne. Both of them, however, died within six months. Then the Sayads placed Roshan Akhtyar, son of the late Emperor Jahandar Shah on the Imperial throne and undertook the administration. The new Emperor was named Mahammad Shah. During the bloody scenes that took place at Delhi the Maratha army was there to help the Sayads. Balaji Vishwanath was able to get the Sanads for the Chowth, Sirdeshmukhi and the Swarajya from the new Emperor through the help of the Sayad Brothers. The Sayad Brothers also arranged that Shahu's mother and other relatives should be allowed to return to the Deccan with Balaji Vishwanath. Balaji Vishwanath re-

* Hussein Ali's action in making peace with the Marathas proceeded from his desire to escape the troubles raised and likely to be raised by the Marathas. The Emperor had ceased to repose any trust in the Sayad brothers and hence out of necessity Hussein Ali made friends with the Marathas. Sheikh Anwar Khan of Burhanpur, also advised Hussein Ali to come to terms with the Marathas through the aid of Shankarji Malhar who was "Sachiva" in Rajaram's time.

turned to Satara in company with the venerable mother and other members of the family of Shahu and the important Sanads and was most warmly received by the gracious Chhatrapati* who was proud to find that the mission had been so gloriously successful.

The Sayad Brothers sought the aid of the Marathas in order to strengthen their own position at Delhi. The Peshwa Balaji Vishwanath remained on his Delhi campaign from November 1718 to July 1719. Just about this time, the endeavours of the East India Company were vigilantly carried on to secure a strong footing at the Imperial Court. An envoy of the E. I. Company named Surgeon Hamilton was at Delhi long before the actual entrance of Balaji Vishwanath into the Imperial Court. In 1715, Hamilton performed an operation on the Emperor Farukseer for the cure of piles, from which the Emperor had been suffering prior to his marriage with Indra Kumari, the beautiful daughter of Ajit Singh of Jodhpur.† The Sanad that Surgeon Hamilton obtained from Farukseer was, indeed, a splendid and auspicious fee for the professional duties performed by the patriotic Surgeon. In fact, the sanad laid the foundation of the British Empire in India. It is remarkable that the systematic, unflagging and zealous attempts

*Balaji Mahadeo Bhanu, Santaji Bhonsle, and about 1500 Maratha soldiers fell a victim to the tumultuous fends at Delhi. The Sayads, however, made amends for the Maratha losses.

†After Farukseer's death, Indra Kumari was re-converted to Hinduism and taken to Jodhpur by her father. This is one of the famous reconversions to Hinduism recorded in History.

of the E. I. Company were going on in the East, the West, the North and the South of India partly unnoticed and mostly disregarded by the Marathas in the early part of the 18th century.

An allusion has already been made to the sound work done by Balaji Vishwanath in directing the attention of Maharashtra to territorial acquisitions in the north and south of India and thus effecting internal peace and unity of purpose.*

*We cannot help observing that the Marathas were, more or less, quite unaware of the zealous endeavours of the E. I. Company in all parts of India to obtain a footing in the political arena and territorial acquisitions. The English had not much political importance till the end of Balaji Baji Rao's regime. *Madhao Rao I* was the first to see through the English designs and his remarks on this point are remarkable. *Vide Sardesai's Madhav Rao I.*

CHAPTER VI

BALAJI VISHWANATH'S WORTH AND WORK.

The series of glorious successes was at once the means of Balaji's rapid rise in the good will of his gracious sovereign the Chhatrapati Shahu as well as the lasting memorial of his calm wisdom, extraordinary ability and organizing genius. After his elevation to the Peshwaship and his glorious return from Delhi with Shahu's mother and wife, Balaji Vishwanath resolutely attended to the improvement of the system of administration,* and especially the land revenue, the main prop of all reforms and improvements. The chronic disorder in the system of land-revenue was urgently in need of proper attention in order to avoid the recurring disputes and quarrels which occasionally culminated in serious ruptures. Balaji now set himself to the proper adjustment and organization of this branch of the administration and his experience and ability were crowned with that success which generates genuine satisfaction and general contentment and order amidst the labyrinth of confusion. He overhauled the whole land revenue department and made proper rules for the division of incomes as well as duties, in the absence of which the Raj was like a ship without a compass. Although this momentous and arduous task entailed great personal and intellectual exertions and ultimately told heavily on his

* Our readers will be much benefitted by a perusal of Professor Sinha's excellent article in the *Journal of Indian History*, April No. of 1928, in which he pays a high tribute to the glorious work done by Balaji Vishwanath for Maharashtra. We have given some extracts from that article elsewhere in this work.

health, Balaji had the gratification to find that the system laid down by him was extremely well suited to the times and the circumstances and that it worked well in spite of all odds. His system has met with the approval of present historians of eminence and also of his contemporaries. The order that followed the confusion is its best panegyric. The grand success which his system ensured is the everlasting monument of his genius and exertions and by the testimony of European as well as Indian authorities, Balaji Vishwanath is justly called the Second Founder of the Maratha Empire.*

The new rules and regulations made by Balaji Vishwanath may be briefly mentioned below.

1. The Sirdeshmukhi: the income under this head was entirely at the Chhatrapati's disposal and under his control.

2. The "Swarajya" included the income to be derived from all other rights: (a) twenty five per cent of this belonged to the sovereign and was styled the "Rajabatti" (b) the remaining seventy five per cent amount was "Mokasa". Six per cent of the entire "Swarajya" income was to be given to the Pant Sachiva; (c) the remainder 69 p. c. was "Ain Mokasa" and of this 3 p. c. was "Nadgoud" and it was entirely at the sovereign's control; (d) the remaining 66 p. c. were to be distributed as Jagheers (for services rendered).

* *Vide* Ranade's *Rise of the Maratha Power* and *History of the Maratha People* by Kincaid and Parasnis. The popular opinion that Balaji Vishwanath was only a wise statesman and not a successful soldier is not accurate. He was equally brave and skilful in the battlefield. Shahu specially praised him as a सेनापति (Maker of armies).

3. The "Rajabatti" was to be realized by the Peshwa, the Pratinidhi and the Sachiva. Mokasa was to be realized by the Sachiva and in the far-lying districts or villages the Chhatrapati's officers were to be sent for the said realization. The "Nadgauda" was to be realized by him to whom it was granted by the sovereign and so also the income of the "Jagheers" was to be realized by the grantee.

4. Certain rights were to be conferred on the Sirdars with regard to the income of the districts concerned.

This system produced a joint interest and cemented the hearts of various parties. Consequently, it led to a common and united effort and tended to produce unity, thus indirectly conducing to effect a peaceful condition in the country and tended to promote enterprise and joint action. Balaji Vishwanath rightly deserves the credit of all this excellent system, which prepared Maharashtra for a bold enterprise and spirited action in the regime of Balaji's son and successor, the heroic Baji Rao.

The ceaseless activity of Balaji Vishwanath produced very baneful consequences on his health. To recoup his health he went to Saswad with the Chhatrapati's consent, thinking that the change might conduce to an improvement. But all hope of recovery was given up at no distant date. The strain and overwork brought on an exhaustion which ultimately proved fatal. The faithful and wise

Balaji Vishwanath died at Saswad on the 2nd of April 1720 A. D.*

An estimate of his worth and work would be nothing short of a recapitulation of his eminently successful missions, his skilful, conciliatory and diplomatic measures and his wise system of land revenue. He was undoubtedly the wisest and the most far-sighted statesman in the Court of the Chhatrapati Shahu. It falls to the lot of only a few persons to be so heartily appreciated by the sovereign during their life-time. Balaji, however, was eminently fortunate in serving a sovereign like the noble-hearted Shahu, ever ready heartily to appreciate and reward the services of

* Balaji's sad demise was followed by the death of Khanderao Dabhade whose son Trimbak Rao succeeded to the office of Senapati by Shahu's orders. Damaji Gaikwad who often was the late Khanderao Dabhade's comrade-in arms was appointed Deputy Senapati with the title of Samsher Bahadur on the recommendation of the late Dabhade. Damaji Gaikwad who died shortly after Dabhade's death, was succeeded by his nephew Pilaji Gaikwad in the office of Deputy Senapati.

Rajwade has accurately shown Grant Duff's mistake in saying that Balaji died in October 1720.

† The writer of these pages feels tempted to mention here the readiness of Shahu to help every good cause, including even social reform. Through the intercession of Chhatrapati Shahu, a social reform of great importance was effected in the shape of encouragement of marriages between the Deshasthas and Konkanasthas. Balaji Vishwanath's brother-in-law (wife's brother) Malhar Dadaji Burway, married his son Antaji Malhar Burway, famous afterwards as Baburao Malhar Burway, to the daughter of the late Peshwa Bahiro-pant Pingle's brother at the instance of the Chhatrapati. This matter deserves special notice, as it had great significance in bringing about a closer union between the Deshasthas and the Konkanasthas.

his servants.† We conclude our estimate of Balaji Vishwanath's worth and work in the words of Professor Sinha: "But soon after Shahu's accession to the throne arose complications which the Pratinidhi could not properly comprehend* and control. Therefore the power slipped away from his hands, and passed into those of Balaji Vishwanath, who rose equal to the occasion and consequently to prominence.† Now to get a clear idea about the circumstances that led to Balaji Vishwanath's rise the condition of Maharashtra and the difficulties of Shahu have to be briefly outlined. The people still persisted in their lawless habits, and the partisans of Shahu and Tarabai, conscious of their importance to their respective Chiefs, found it most profitable to fish in troubled waters. Indeed the country was honey-combed with unruly chieftains like Damaji Thorat, Krishnarao Khataoker, Udaji Chavan and others, who lived on organized plunder and spread terror through the land. In such circumstances law and order can never thrive, and in such circumstan-

* In the *Peshwa's Bakhar* the following appears about this Peshwa:—महाराजांची सेवा निष्ठेनें करून, मर्द व साहाये राज्यांत मनुष्य नाना, ऐसा लौकिक वाढवून, महाराजांची कृपा संपादून प्रधानपद मिळविलें; जीवादारभ्य धर्म करून शत्रू पराभवार्थे पाववून महाराजांच्या राज्याचा बंदोबस्त केला" (Translation: Having faithfully served the Maharajah, having won reputation as the brave and wise person in the kingdom and having obtained the gracious favour of the Maharajah, Nana (Balaji Vishwanath was ordinarily known as Nana or Balajipant Nana) rose to the dignity of Prime Minister. After life-long exertions, he defeated the enemies of the State and laid the foundations of systematic government.)

† Professor Sinha's article in the *Journal of Indian History*, August, 1928.

ces did Balaji Vishwanath find the country when he was selected by Shahu to help him out of the situation, and to save the country from anarchy. How the Peshwa succeeded in restoring order to Shahu's Kingdom and in finding employment for the various discordant elements, will be told in the coming pages."

CHAPTER VII.

THE PESHWA BAJI RAO I. 1720-1740.

Baji Rao was appointed Peshwa by the Chhatrapati and received the dress of honour at Musoor on the 17th April 1720 A. D. There was no delay in the appointment of Baji Rao as the Prime Minister of the Maratha Empire and the allegation of delay attributed by some to caste hatred between the Deshasthas and the Konkanasthas is groundless for reasons which we have elsewhere given. We attach small importance to the aforesaid cause.* There was no caste-hatred between the two communities as such and there is no earthly reason for such a groundless hatred. The Deshasthas have done very much in the interests of their brethren of the Konkanastha community and the Konkanasthas have done much more for their brethren, the Deshasthas. Under these circumstances it is simply absurd to say that caste-hatred was the cause of delay in Baji Rao's

* The career of the Chhatrapati Shahu is so intimately connected with the life-work of Baji Rao that without giving the details of the latter, the former could not be complete. A perusal of these pages would show that with the advent of Baji Rao on the political horizon of Maharashtra, a new era commenced so far as both the policy of the Marathas and their methods of work were concerned. Baji Rao deserves the credit of having effected a change in the views of Shahu by his memorable eloquence and arguments in favour of the extension of the Maratha Raj. Baji Rao persuaded Shahu to regard the conquest of Hindusthan as the birth-right of the Marathas.

appointment as Peshwa.* The fact is that there was no delay and caste hatred as such there never was, though alleged by foreign writers of Indian History generally and of the Maratha period particularly.

The importance of Baji Rao's services to the cause of Chhatrapati and to the Maratha Empire is such as to deserve a detailed description. Even the European writers of Maratha History have ungrudgingly and unequivocally admitted the untiring exertions and superior military and diplomatic genius of Baji Rao in raising Shahu's small kingdom to the status of an Empire during his short but eminently heroic† career. The European writers of Maratha History can never be charged

* Our readers should bear in mind that Ambajipant Purandare was zealously exerting himself for Baji Rao's appointment to the Peshwaship. During the Peshwa's rule the most trusted admirers and servants of the Peshwas were Deshasthas. Again Balaji Vishwanath's ability and genius were duly brought to the notice of the Chhatrapati by the Deshasthas and by the Chitnis Khando Ballal. It is also well-known that Balaji Vishwanath was the first to try zealously for the release of Shripatrao Pratinidhi's father (Parsharam Trimbak) from confinement and it was Balaji Vishwanath who brought to the Chhatrapati's kind notice the bravery of Shreepatrao after the victory in the battle of Oundh over Krishnarao Khataokar's forces. There may have been personal rivalry between the various parties. There was no caste-hatred as such.

† *Vide The Marathas and the Moghuls* by the present writer.

"Baji Rao was the first to show the path by which afterwards Mahadaji Sindhia rose to greatness."—H. G. Keane.

"The Nizam espoused the cause of Sambhaji of Kolhapur at the cost of Shahu Raja who looked to Baji Rao for counsel and for vengeance; for these Shahu would have bartered his life, and for these he now virtually sold the supremacy of

with partiality to the Peshwas in general. What they have said about this great Peshwa is noteworthy and endorsed by the logic of facts and the Maratha records.

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his Empire. Shahu Raja wished to march in person against his rival but this was thought to be improper. Full powers were, therefore, delegated to Baji Rao and the great influence which the Peshwa had acquired may be observed in the promptitude with which many of the most unruly and factious of the Shilledar families willingly gathered round the standard of the nation. After being foiled in his attempts by the Peshwa Baji Rao, the Nizam wrote to the Raja Shahu as well as to the Pratinidhi who was Baji Rao's opponent. In this letter the Nizam tried again to foment caste-hatred and to pose as the friend of the Marathas, but to no purpose. Raja Shahu paid no heed to these delusive demonstrations of friendship. The Marathas under Baji Rao and the Nizam entered on a struggle at no distant date, and as subsequent events proved, the cunning attempts of the Nizam-ul-Mulk were nipped in the bud by the foresight and vigour of Baji Rao.

During Baji Rao's regime several Maratha families rose to greatness by doing excellent work for the Maratha Empire which the genius of that great Peshwa extended by uniting the hearts of the Marathas and the Maratha Brahmins.

“ पहिले बाजीराव पेशवे ह्यांनी जुने मराठे सरदार एकत्र करून त्यांच्या हातून छप्परी नोकरी घेण्याचा वांगला प्रयत्न केला होता, असें अनेक जुन्या कागदांवरून दिसून येते. ”

— *Vide Itihas Sangraha* Vol. II., June No. p. 82.

It was the end and aim of the policy of Baji Rao to try for the expansion of the Maratha Empire by the joint efforts of a united Maharashtra and his whole life he sacrificed for that purpose.

“ I have throughout the foregoing hinted at the power of Baji Rao, who will always be capable of rendering abortive any application made to the Shahu Raja, and probably show

In a grand Durbar specially convened for that purpose, the Chhatrapati Shahu invested Baji Rao with the insignia of the Peshwa's office.* The gracious Chhatrapati delivered a mellifluous speech by way of advice to the Peshwa, the abler son of an able father, who had enjoyed the Chhatrapati's fullest confidence and who had fully justified it by his eminent and faithful services to the noble sovereign of the Marathas. When conferring the great office on Baji Rao in the Durbar, the Chhatrapati was much moved when referring to Balaji Vishwanath's worth and work and it was a scene *which the heroic Peshwa could never have forgot-*

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his resentment thereat, so that although a civil correspondence with the said Raja may not be amiss, care must be taken that he is not solicited for what interferes with Baji Rao, whose authority at court is ever such, that in the absence of the Raja, and contrary to the advice of the seven principal counsellors, he can enforce a complete obedience to his sole mandates...."—*Forrest's Selections*, Vol. I, p. 80.

".... He is very secret in his purposes, in so much that the forces which attend him are often ignorant where he intends to lead them. They follow him with an implicit obedience..."—*Ibid.*

* Baji Rao received the dress of honour conferring the dignity of Peshwa on 17th April 1720 at Massor near Karhad while Shahu was in camp. The popular belief that there was delay in conferring the dignity on Baji Rao and that Shahu was advised to defer the matter is not substantiated by any evidence. On the contrary, there is ample proof for asserting that Shahu had been fully convinced of Baji Rao's ability and that his advisors shared the same opinion, though some futile opposition might have existed towards the Peshwa in the minds of the refractory courtiers who were victims to the Nizam's tempting offers and attempts to set the Marathas at loggerheads.

ten during his life-time. It was the great Chhatrapati's admirable and genuine sympathy as well as the great charm of his extremely good nature that always produced a deep impression on the minds of his officers and generally tended to make them firmly attached to the throne and served as an incentive to exertion.*

Baji Rao signalized the assumption of his exalted office by a suitable speech,† in which the future plans of aggrandisement and extension of the Maratha power were briefly mentioned and appreciated generally by the Durbarees except probably Shripatrao Pratinidhi.

* "The Letters, Memoranda &c." published in the *Kavyethihas Sangraha* of Rao Bahadur Sane, publishes the following interesting account in this connection :—

“ बाजीराव सातत्यास जाऊन महाराजांस भेटले. नंतर वस्त्रांचे बोलणे लागले. ते काळी बाजीराव साहेब बहुत जहाम प्रकृतीचे, अवघा वेळ शिपाईगिरीत मग, राज्यकारभार चालवावयास सवूरी असावी तो भाव नव्हता. त्यामुळे या पदाचे उपयोगी नाहीत अशी राजधी यांची बहुतांशी मसलत दिली. सर्वांचे ऐकून घेऊन सर्वांस एक उत्तर दिले की बाकाजी विश्वनाथ यांनी या राज्यांत जीवादारभ्य भ्रमसाहस करून पुढे सुख भोगिले नाही. याजकरिता यांस वस्त्रे तूत देतो. यांचे दैवी असल्यास धीसंभू कृपा करील; उपयोगी नाही असे दिसल्यास पुढे विचार होईल. अशी श्रीदेवाची प्राप्तीना करून महाराजांनी बाजीराव साहेबांची वस्त्रे दिली. कांही दिवस हुजूर राहिले.”

* In the above quotation there is strong evidence of Shahu's deep regard for Balaji Vishwanath and a warm appreciation of the work done by the Peshwa. The words “यांनी या राज्यांत जीवादारभ्य भ्रम साहस करून पुढे सुख भोगिले नाही.” deserve special notice, as they point out Shahu's nobility of mind and his high opinion about Balaji Vishwanath's worth and work for the state.

† Baji Rao intended to destroy the Moghul power, while Shahu had respect for the Moghul throne. It was, therefore,

Baji Rao embarked on the realization of his schemes in right earnest after his investiture by Shahu. The state of the Moghul Empire at this time was such that any delay in the proper use of the golden opportunity would have been fatal. The Peshwa's first thought was, therefore, to carry the Maratha flag beyond the Narbada and into the heart of Hindusthan. It was, indeed, a Herculean task when the opposition* to this Peshwa's plans is taken into consideration.

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necessary to effect a change in Shahu's mentality. Baji Rao's eloquence brought about the desired change and partially persuaded Shahu to sanction an attack on the Moghul Court. Mr. Sirdesai rightly observes on this point :

“शाहूची भावना बादशाहीना प्रत्यक्ष पाडान करण्यास अनुकूल नव्हती. मुसलमानांच्या दरबारांत त्यांचे आयुष्य गेल्यामुळे शिवाजीची उच्च स्मृति त्यांच्या ठिकाणी उत्पन्न झाली नाही. राजकीय घडामोडींचे हुरत झाडूस पूर्णपणे कळत होतेंसे दिसत नाही.”—*Vide Ranoji Rao Sindhia* by the present writer, pages 5, 12.

“Such were probably the real opinions of Shreepattrao but the wisdom of Baji Rao was of a much higher order. Baji Rao painted the condition of India, the weakness, indolence, and imbecility of the Moghuls and the activity, energy and enterprise of the Marathas. But for the penetration and vigour of Baji Rao, the artful schemes of Nizam-ul-Mulk would probably have unlinked the connecting chain by which Balaji Vishwanath had joined the interests as well as the inclinations of most of the Hindu Chieftains of the Deccan.”—*Grant Duff*.

* The Pratinidhi Shripatrao was opposed to Baji Rao's plans of expeditions for subduing the Moghul territories in Hindusthan. “In some quarters it is believed that the cause of difference between Baji Rao and the Pratinidhi arose from the difference in their caste. I do not believe it. Love of power is so great that it has caused feuds bet-

Chinkilich Khan, the Nizam, was his rival and antagonist; the Pratinidhi had resolved on besetting his path with every conceivable obstacle; other subterranean dangers were not inconsiderable. The Chhatrapati Shahu was a king, good hearted and brave, but inclined to behave in a subordinate attitude towards the Moghul Emperor and possessed of no independent judgment, having been trained in the Moghul Zanana; and the resources of the Maratha Raj were not very encouraging. But Bajirao surmounted all these difficulties and so prevailed upon the noble-hearted Chhatrapati as not only to obtain his consent for the Hindustan expeditions but even to obtain a free admission from Shahu, after placing before him the pros and cons of the case, that a disregard of the golden opportunity would be undoubtedly a political blunder. Having been bred and brought up under the kind care of the Begum (Auranzeb's daughter) and accustomed to regard the Emperor as "Mâ Bâp," Shahu had an innate respect for the Emperor at Delhi. It was a difficult task to convince Shahu that such a mere sentimental respect for the Emperor was of no avail, that the Moghul Empire was bound to fall; that if the opportunity was allowed to slip, the Marathas would never be able

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ween father and son—between real brothers. What do we find in the case of Aurangzeb and his father Shahajahan? Both the rivals were strong and tried to secure power. Did not Balaji Vishwanath save Parsharam Trimbak from danger? It is impossible that the Pratinidhi would be so ungrateful as to forget this fact. I think Baji Rao and the Pratinidhi were above caste prejudices"—*Banoji Rao Sindhia* by the present writer, page 9.

to take advantage of it or profit by it afterwards; and that some other power might step in and have the whole advantage to itself. Shahu deserves the credit for rising to the occasion after seeing the force and magnitude of Bajirao's far-sighted and sound views and noble arguments as well as for his whole-hearted support to the heroic Peshwa. But for Bajirao's undaunted resolution the Maratha Raj would certainly have been confined to the comparatively small patch of territory in Maharashtra and the Karnatic.

Baji Rao had to struggle with two powers—the Moghuls in Hindustan and the Portuguese in the Deccan in addition to the machinations of the crafty Chinkilich Khan (the Nizam). The Emperor Mahammad Shah was a dissolute person, engrossed in base enjoyments, leaving the cares of the administration to low, vicious and disreputable partisans. The Emperor had lost all regard for the Sayad Brothers who were naturally discontented at heart. The Nizam was bent on self-aggrandisement and zealously strengthening his influence. The Sayads wished to curb his power and transferred him to Malwa. They instructed Dilawar Khan and their nephew Alam Ally Khan at Aurangabad to lose no opportunity to defeat the Nizam's deep-laid plans. Dilawar Khan failed to unite his forces with those of Alam Ally and then make a united stand against the Nizam. Dilawar Khan hastily attacked the Nizam at Burhanpur in June 1720 A. D. and suffered defeat and death in a bloody battle. Elated with this victory the Nizam marched against Alam Ally Khan who was defeated and slain in the battle of Balapur in July

1720 A. D. These successes made Nizam-ul-Mulk very powerful and also excited the jealousy of the Sayads,* who naturally began to concert measures to safeguard their influence from the Nizam's encroachments. This arch-intriguer's star was in the ascendant, and after the fall of the Sayad Brothers, Mahomed Shah appointed the Nizam (Chinkilich Khan) as Vazeer, as Nazir Mahomed Amin had died before assuming the office.

Nizam-ul-Mulk could not take over the duties of his new office prior to January 1722 A. D., as self-interest held him fast to his post in the Deccan. He went to Delhi to take up his post but the Shah's Durbar could not agree with him. In disgust the Nizam left the Vaziri and returned to the Deccan. The Emperor conferred on him the additional duties of the Subhedar of Guzerath, while secret instructions were sent to Mubareej Khan, the Kotwal of Hyderabad, not to hand over the charge of the Deccan Subhedari to the Nizam.†

* Hussain Ali persuaded the emperor Mahomed Shah to proceed to the South to curb the Nizam's power, keeping Abdul Ali at the Imperial capital for the control of state affairs. Hussain Ali accompanied the Emperor but when they had proceeded a few miles from Agra Hussain Ali was stabbed by an applicant named Meer Hyder in the October of 1720. Hussain Ali's brother Abdulla retaliated by attacking the Emperor's partisans (suspected to be accomplices in the murder of Hussain Ali) at Shahpur, where a fierce battle took place, in which Abdulla was defeated and taken prisoner.

† The Emperor was highly displeased with Asaf Jah, the Nizam for his extremely selfish and greedy conduct. Mubareej Khan was secretly instructed to collect an army and destroy Asaf Jah the Nizam's power. Asaf Jah solicited the help of Baji Rao. With the Peshwa's potent aid, Mubareej

A fierce battle took place between the Nizam and Mubareej Khan at Sakhar Kheda in 1724, in which Mubareej was defeated and killed. From 1724 A. D., the Nizam (Chinkilich Khan) began to found an independent State, while the blind Durbar of Mahomed Shah was engaged in a round of low pleasures and wicked machinations.

Baji Rao had to turn his attention first to Khandesh and Malwa, where he sent Ramchandra Ganesh to realize the income of the Maratha State in the shape of Chowth and Sirdeshmukhi. In 1722, Baji Rao authorised Udaji Pawar to exercise authority in respect of Chowth and Sirdeshmukhi. In 1724 A. D. Baji Rao sent Chimaji Appa (his brother) and Udhaji Pawar again to Malwa, where they defeated the Subhedar Rajah Girdhar Bahadur. They also defeated the Subhedar at Sarangpur, when the latter paid them Rs. 15,000. In 1725, Baji Rao himself invaded Malwa to establish the Maratha rule and to make his sway over Malwa the stepping stone for the conquest of the whole of the Moghul provinces. During this invasion, Malhar Rao Holkar, Ranoji Rao Sindhia, and Udaji Pawar rendered good service of which Baji Rao showed his appreciation by giving them Sanads for hereditary Jagheers. In 1726, Baji Rao undertook an expedition into the Karnatic, accompanied by Fathesing Bhonsle, the

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Khan was defeated and slain with his two sons in the battle of Sakhar Kheda on the 1st of October 1724. The Nizam Asaf Jah failed to pay a due amount to the Peshwa for the expenses of this campaign. Through Baji Rao's generosity Asaf Jah profited immensely and became secure in the Subhedari of the Deccan.

founder of the Akalkote—principality. Baji Rao proceeded as far as Serangapattam,* realising the Chowth and Mokâsâ rights and punishing those who were refractory or resisted the rights. Baji Rao then turned his attention to the destruction of the nets which the Nizam, after abandoning the post of Vazir, was spreading for the ruin of the Maratha power and for the establishment of his influence. The Nizam had practically begun to act independently of the nominal court at Delhi presided over by a weak Emperor like Mahomed Shah and consisting of courtiers as well unfit for office by their worthless characters as by their incompetency and inexperience. This was a golden opportunity for the self-seeking Chinklichkhan who found in Baji Rao a noble and able antagonist ready to counteract mischief.

The wily Nizam won over the shortsighted Pratinidhi by a substantial bribe† and through him succeeded in persuading the Chhatrapati to accept some cash amount in lieu of the Chowth and Sir-deshmukhi and a Jagheer near Indapur. As soon as Baji Rao returned from his Karnatic and Srirangpattan expeditions, he heard of the Chhatrapati's willingness to agree to a cash payment instead of the right to Chowth. He lost no time in explaining the whole situation to the noble-hearted but guileless Chhatrapati and frankly telling him that the crafty and cunning Nizam-ul-Mulk had bribed the Pratinidhi and that the cash payment

* This expedition was forced upon Baji Rao at the pressing request of Shreepatrao Pratinidhi.

† The Nizam promised to confer on the Pratinidhi a Jagheer in Berar.

would preclude the possibility of the Maratha rise by putting a stop to Maratha interference in the Imperial provinces for realizing the right of Chowth and Sirdeshmukhi.* The Chhatrapati saw through the whole evil and readily consented to support Baji Rao in his patriotic plans in respect of the extension of the Maratha power and the suppression of the Nizam's evil intrigues which were directed to spread defection among the Marathas and to profit by their internecine feuds. The Chhatrapati not only approved of Baji Rao's plans in an open Durbar but even he went to the length of rejecting the Pratinidhi's policy and reprimanding him for falling a victim to the Nizam's gold. Thus foiled in his attempts to gain his ends through the greedy Pratinidhi, the Nizam endeavoured to foment the feud between the Chhatrapati and Sambhaji of Kolhapur.† This dexterous device of the Nizam also failed owing to the foresight and valour of Baji Rao who determined to attack him in his own territory. The Chhatrapati was so far prevailed upon to see through the intrigues and machinations of the Nizam as even to agree to lead an expedition† against that inveterate rival of the Maratha Power. Baji Rao, however, urged the impropriety of the Chhatrapati's proceeding in person against an insignificant Moghul Subhedar like the Nizam-ul-Mulk and thereby lowering the status of the king of the Marathas. This sagacious view of Baji Rao was

* But for Baji Rao, the guileless Shahu would have become the Jaghirdar of the Nizam through the Pratinidhi's greed!

† In 1721 A. D. Baji Rao obtained the Chhatrapati's permission to make Poona the seat of his residence. *Vide Poona in Bygone Days* by Rao Bahadur Parasnis.

heartily approved of by the Chhatrapati who promised the Peshwa every help in the expedition against the Nizam.

The two contending rivals came face to face at no distant date. On an auspicious day in the November of 1727 A.D. Bajī Rao started from Poona on the expedition against the Nizam. He had slight skirmishes with Iwaj Khan, an officer of the Nizam and then directed his march towards Mahoor and Aurangabad, whence he came abruptly to Khandesh with the object of defeating the Nizam's plans by giving out that he would attack Burhanpur. As soon as Bajī Rao came to know that the Nizam had crossed the Ajantha Ghats he divided his forces into two divisions, sending one in the direction of Burhanpur and himself leading the other into Guzerath. The Nizam who was still in the vicinity of Burhanpur awaiting Bajī Rao's attack was dejected to find that the Peshwa had invaded Guzerath and was establishing his influence there. The Nizam desired to retaliate by proceeding to invade Poona. The Peshwa, however, anticipated his rival's plan and fell upon his rear as soon he had marched to Ahmadnagar on his way to Poona by crossing the Kasara Ghats and laying the Vaijapore and Gandapur districts under contribution. By skilfully moving forces in such a way as to hem in his rival in a difficult position the Peshwa succeeded in outwitting the Nizam and bringing him to his knees.* The state of blockade became exceed-

* The Peshwa succeeded in exhausting the Nizam's army by his rapid movements from Raur to Aurangabad, Aurangabad to Burhanpur and Guzerath and thence to the Godavari Districts. The Nizam followed the Peshwa. Retreating

ingly disastrous to the Moghuls as provisions and fodder were prevented from reaching the Moghul camp. Finding that an escape from the Peshwa's blockade was quite impossible, the Nizam became hopeless and sent Iwaj Khan to solicit negotiations with the Peshwa, who, with a true soldier's frankness, expressed his desire to open negotiations for peace on conditions (a) that Sambhaji should be delivered without delay, (b) that forts in the Hyderabad territory should be made over to the Marathas for the safety of those who would visit the places for realizing the Chowth, (c) that the past arrears due on account of the Chowth and Sirdeshmukhi rights should be paid at once. The Nizam agreed to the last two articles, objecting to the first. At last a peace was concluded in 1728 A. D. The Nizam invited the Peshwa to a banquet.* Baji Rao went to the Nizam's camp, attended by Malhar-Rao Holkar and Ranoji Rao Sindhia.† The Nizam, of course, was curbed very considerably by

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slowly Baji Rao tempted the Nizam to follow him from the Godaveri valley into the hilly and difficult tracts in the vicinity of Palkhed, where a fierce attack was made by Baji Rao on the Nizam's army. The Nizam was defeated in the battle of Palkhed on the 25th of February, 1728.

* This was the first time that the Peshwa and the Nizam met each other. The banquet scene was imposing. The description of this personal meeting between the rivals is interesting. For details *vide Malhar Rao Holkar* by the present writer, pages 19-20.

† After this victory Baji Rao conferred a Jagheer of 12 Parganas for military purposes, as both of these officers had rendered very excellent services and won the Peshwa's favour. *Vide Subhedar Malhar Rao Holkar and Ranoji Rao Sindhia* by the present author.

his defeat. But Baji Rao did not take as much advantage of the victory as would have been possible under the circumstances of the case. This is a noble and characteristic trait in this great Peshwa's character. Baji Rao, a true soldier, was never hard-hearted and extortionate in his behaviour towards a vanquished foe, as may clearly be seen in the treaty concluded ten years later after this Peshwa's memorable victory over the Nizam at Tal Bhopal in 1738, A.D.*

After this victory Baji Rao directed his attention to the Chowth and Sardeshmukhi of the Province of Guzerath, where Sarbulund Khan was trying to resist the Maratha claims and pressing the dissolute Court at Delhi to help him by sending him money. Sarbulund Khan, however, made virtue of necessity when he heard of the Peshwa's victory over the Nizam and opened negotiations for peace with him. The Peshwa's brother Chimaji Appa was already making his presence felt in Guzerath. The coming of Baji Rao expedited the affair, as the Peshwa sent his Vakil Shamraj-pant to Sarbulund Khan to settle the terms of the treaty†. After some discussion, Sarbulund Khan

* But for Baji Rao's generosity, the Nizam Asaf Jah would have been totally ruined. We have fully discussed this subject in our *Life of Baji Rao I*.

† Kantaji Kadam Bande and Pillaji Gaikwad had made several incursions into Guzerath and realized Chowth and Sardeshmukhi rights but they paid little heed to the settlement of the country and the protection of the peasantry. Baji Rao and Chimaji Appa attended to the settlement of the provinces and the suppression of the dacoits who troubled the provinces.

signed the treaty agreeing to the cession of Chowth and Sardeshmukhi of Guzerath excepting the town of Surat and five per cent on the total assessment of Ahmedabad city. Baji Rao agreed to protect the country from dacoits and refractory Zamindars. Portions of the Sardeshmukhi and Mokasa of the province of Guzerath were paid to Dabhade* under the orders of the Peshwa. Thus, by the end of 1730 A. D. (in less than two years) Baji Rao was able to establish his influence in Khandesh, Malwa and Guzerath in spite of the unwillingness of the Delhi Court and the latent opposition of the perfidious Chinkilich Khan.† Baji Rao's absence from Maharashtra furnished a golden opportunity to Udaji Chavan who instigated Sambhaji of Kolhapur to make head against the Chhatrapati notwithstanding the desire of the latter to make peace and avoid all internal feuds. Aided by Udaji Chavan, Sambhaji collected a large force and began to make inroads into Shahu's territory by fixing his camp to the North of the river Warna. Baji Rao's absence from Shahu's Durbar was also a good opportunity for the Pratinidhi Shripatrao to endeavour to wipe off the disgrace of having intrigued with the Nizam by leading a campaign against Sambhaji and thus winning Shahu's favour. Shripatrao obtained the Chhatrapati's order to proceed against the combined forces of Udaji Chavan and Sambhaji, whom the Pratinidhi defeated and

* Dabhade did not like the Peshwa's interference in Guzerat. This circumstance led to very undesirable results, as subsequent events shewed.

† After his defeat and the conclusion of the treaty the Nizam was secretly trying to find an opening to check Baji Rao's power, though he could not do so openly.

dispersed capturing several partizans of Sambhaji and also Tarabai and Rajasbai, who were brought to Satara. The noble-hearted Chhatrapati treated Tarabai and Rajasbai with due respect and released all the persons captured by the Pratinidhi. Shahu gave a fresh proof of his noble disposition and high mind by keeping Tarabai and Rajasbai in a palace in Satara fort as desired by them. A treaty was concluded between the Chhatrapati and Sambhaji of Kolhapur,* which poured oil on the troubled waters for some time. The Chhatrapati highly praised the Pratinidhi for his smart action against the combined forces of Sambhaji and and Udaji Chavan.†

While the Chhatrapati's army achieved this success in Maharashtra, the Peshwa Baji Rao was facing a peculiar danger in Guzarath, where

*The terms of the treaty were as follows :—

- (a) That Sambhaji should hand over the fort of Ratnagiri to Shahu in lieu of the Tophâl fortress on the Tungabhadra.
- (b) That Shahu should cede to Sambhaji all the territory lying between Salshi and Ankola on the Konkan coast in lieu of Miraj, Tasgaon, Athani, and some villages to the north of the Krishna and some petty fortresses in the territory of the Vijapur kingdom.
- (c) That if the Marathas conquered any territory to the south of the Tungabhadra, it should be equally divided between Shahu and Sambhaji.

† At the request of the Chhatrapati Shahu, Sambhaji punished the refractory conduct of the misguided Udaji Chavan by levelling his fortress at Wadgaon to the ground in 1730 A. D.

Trimbak Rao Dabhade*, at the instigation of the Nizam, was collecting a large force to measure his strength with the Peshwa! Baji Rao, however, was too cautious to be deluded by such threats. The Peshwa fully informed the Chhatrapati of the unpatriotic and short-sighted conduct of Dabhade in falling a victim to the machinations of the crafty Nizam-ul-Mulk and made strenuous exertions to meet Dabhade before he was joined by the Nizam's forces. Baji Rao was surprised to find that Pillaji Gaikwad, Kanthaji Kadam Bande, Udaji Rao Pawar† and others also joined Dabhade's standard, forgetting that the old and cunning Nizam was setting the dogs by the ears and profiting by these internal quarrels. Leaving aside all these considerations about the unnatural combination, Baji Rao left Poona with his army and entered the theatre of hostility in Guzerath, endeavouring at the same time to come to an understanding with Dabhade who was duly informed of the evil consequences of such internecine dissensions. Dabhade, however, was not only deaf to all these wise counsels but even went to the length of insisting on an attack on the advanced party of the Peshwa, headed by Abaji Kaware. Damaji Gaikwad attacked Abaji Kaware who suffered a defeat. The hopes of an amicable settlement were thus frustrated. Nothing but an appeal to arms was to decide the matter. Baji Rao advanced cautiously and occupied the plains that lay between Dabhai and Baroda. Dabhade's forces were in the vicinity. The two

* Trimbak Rao Dabhade disliked the Peshwa's campaign in Guzerath and his treaty with Surbuland Khan.

† There had been inveterate enmity between Gaikwad and the Pawars of Dhar.

forces came face to face and the battle began in the morning of the 1st of April 1731 A. D. It was a bloody battle, in which brave Maratha Sirdars like Jawaji Rao Dabhade, Maloji Rao Pawar and Damaji Gaikwad were killed on the battlefield, while Udaji Pawar, Chimmaji Damodar, Anandrao Pawar, Pillaji Gaikwad and Kunwar Bahadur were severely wounded. The fate of this sad battle was decided by Trimbakrao Dabhade being killed by a bullet while he was sitting on this elephant and bravely, though misguided, directing the operations. Dabhade's forces were dispersed in confusion. Alas! that the Nizam's deep-laid machinations could not be seen through by the brave but misguided Dabhade. Shahu* was grieved beyond measure to hear of this sad affair. Nay he was highly exasperated at the Nizam's faithless conduct after the conclusion of the treaty of peace and urged Baji Rao to undo the evil that the Nizam was bent on doing in spite of his plighted faith. It is a great pity that the attempts of the Nizam were allowed to go unpunished for long time even after the treaty and that his machinations, though clearly perceived by Baji Rao, went on unnoticed by Maratha Sirdars

*Again we have an instance of the nobility of the Chhatrapati Shahu disposition. The Chhatrapati went to Talegaon on a visit of condolence to Dabhade's wife and he brought his son Yeshwantrao to Satara, where Baji Rao was called by the Chhatrapati for a reconciliation. The following words are remarkable:—"कंदेराव दाभाडे यांची क्वी ठमावाई होती. त्यांच्याकडील बाजीराव यशला येऊन येऊन छत्रपती महाराज मोठले की शंभवरुख तुझा पुत्र, व बाळाजी विघ्नाय व कंदेराव दाभाडे यांचा मारूपणा होता. त्यावरून हा (बाजीराव) ही तुझा पुत्र आहे."—*Kavyetihas Sangraha*.

of the type of the Pratinidhi, Dabhade and Udaji Chavan. It is even a calamity that the Nizam should have found such combustible material for his intrigues among the ranks of the Marathas.*

The Chhatrapati, in pursuance of his excellent policy of conciliation, obviated the chances of further friction between the Peshwa and the Senapati Dabhade† by effecting an agreement signed by Bajji Rao and the Senapati‡ in the August of 1731 A. D.

The defeat and death of Senapati Dabhade on the battlefield of Dabhai in the April of 1731 A.D. was a great shock to the Nizam whose hopes fell to the ground and who now expected a terrible

* Self-interest prevailed on higher considerations for the interest of the nation and several Maratha Sirdars, though brave, fell victims to the gold offered by the Nizam; hence this great rival of the Maratha power continued to go scot-free for a long time, though Bajji Rao subdued him at Tal Bhopal and quenched his wily spirit for ever. Yet the Nizam, soliciting the Peshwa's favour by appealing to him as his nephew, was not punished as severely as his frequent breaches of faith and treaties certainly deserved.

† The management of Dabhade's Jaghears was entrusted to Umabai Dabhade and Pillaji Gaikwad, a trusted officer of the late Trimbakrao Dabhade.

‡ The details of this agreement were as follows:—

"The Senapati should have full control over the province of Guzerath, while the Malwa province should be entirely under the Peshwa Bajji Rao and they should not interfere with each other's territory. Half of the income of the Guzerath province should be credited to the Chhatrapati through the Peshwa and after defraying the expenses, the balance (excepting Sirbulund Khan's share,) should be credited to the Chhatrapati."

vengeance from the wary Peshwa who knew the Nizam very well but whose frank and noble nature precluded the possibility of a total destruction of the Nizam's power and influence. The great dissembler and arch-intriguer now trembled and became so nervous as to despair even of the existence of his authority in the Deccan. But his life-long and experience of human nature as well as his remarkable cunning and tact came to his aid. He posed as Baji Rao's friend, begged him to forgive any faults which he might unknowingly have committed and swore that he would help in the Peshwa's great end and aim of striking at the root of the Moghul throne at Delhi. The arch intriguer so far humiliated himself as to regard Baji Rao as his younger brother, enhancing the effect of his protestations by solemnly handing over the control of the six Deccan Subhas to the Peshwa. This show of sincerity and friendly attitude were duly discerned by the Peshwa who, however, with commendable foresight, tried to forget and forgive the past and to utilize the Nizam's solemn words and promises of help in the attainment of the Peshwa's aims in the Imperial Capital of Delhi, where Baji Rao heartily desired to establish the Maratha influence. In such a frame of mind the great Peshwa connived at the Nizam's duplicity and former intrigues and embarked on his expedition to the Malwa province in 1732 A. D. The Peshwa and the Nizam personally exchanged courtesies as there was an occasion for them to meet for a second time, when the Nizam paid special attention to securing the Peshwa's favour, solemnly reiterating his promises to help Baji Rao in his heart's desire to obtain pre-eminence at Delhi and in Hindusthan.

The Imperial Court at Delhi, which consisted of flatterers and low-minded parasites, was firmly opposed to the progress of the Marathas under the able leadership of Baji Rao. The courtiers succeeded in recalling and humiliating Serbulund Khan for his readiness to grant Chowth and Sirdeshmukhi of Guzarath to the Marathas and in his place Rajah Abhaysing of Jodhpur was sent. Abhaysing was an excellent prototype of the courtiers at Delhi. He was vicious and cruel and had usurped the throne of Jodhpur after killing his father. He was utterly unfit for the post. He signalized his Subhedarship by defeating Pillaji Gaikwad and driving him from Baroda and ultimately assassinating him. The assassination of Pillaji Gaikwad at the instance of Rajah Abhaysing roused the Maratha indignation and made Abhaysing despair of any success in his regime.* Abhaysing had to leave Guzarath to save his life from the Maratha wrath. Foiled in his attempts to stay the Maratha advance, Subhedar Rajah Abhaysing had to proceed in despair to Jodhpur, leaving his Mutalik to manage the affairs of Guzarath.

While Baji Rao was on his way to Malwa, Chimnaji Appa assisted by Pillaji Jadhav and Malhar Rao Holkar, had already defeated Daya Bahadur, the Subhedar at Tirla,† midway between Dhar and the Nerbada. He heard of the troubles

* Abhaysing's dastardly deed in bringing about the assassination of Pillaji Gaikwad was duly avenged by the deceased's brother and son who rose in arms against the Jodhpur Prince and attacked his territory. Abhaysing left hastily for his capital to save it from the impending Maratha inroads.

† *Vide Subhedar Malhar Rao Holkar* by the present writer for details.

raised in the Deccan by the Portuguese and the Sidhi of Janjira. Bajirao sent Chimnaji Appa and Pillaji Jadhav to Satara to receive the Chhatrapati's instructions to proceed against the Portuguese and the Sidhi and himself remained in Malwa to direct the operations there.

After Daya Bahadur's fall in the battle of Tirla, Mahammad Khan Bangash was appointed to the post of the Subhedar of Malwa in addition to his duties as Subhedar of Allahabad. Mahammad Khan Bangash intended to invade the territory of Chhatrasal, the Rajah of Bundelkhand, who was unable to cope with the forces of the Subhedar. Being at the end of his wits, Rajah Chhatrasal appealed to Baji Rao, "the protector of the Hindus," for his safety and escape from the overwhelming danger.* Baji Rao totally defeated Bangash and reduced him to a very humiliating plight, which led to his disgrace and loss of prestige. The Maharajah was rejoiced to hear of Baji Rao's victory and warmly received the Peshwa with tears of joy running down his cheeks. Maharajah Chhatrasal extended a hearty hospitality to his deliverer from the dire danger and conferred on Baji Rao the fort of Zansi and the adjoining territory as a sincere mark of his warm feelings of gratitude for the

* Maharajah Chhatrasal's life and career are most interesting for a student of Maratha History. Born in Sambat 1706 on 3rd of Jaith Sudhi, Chhatrasal played a romantic part in the History of Bundelkhand and had the honour of receiving the help and hospitality of the illustrious Shivaji at ^{at} Sinhvagarh. The Poet Lal describes in his "Chhatraprakash" the career of this Bundela hero in a glowing and graphic style. Like Shivaji Chhatrasal was deeply religious, being a devotee of the Divine Shri Rama.

Peshwa,* whom the Maharaja adopted as a Dharma Putra, the saviour of Bundelkhand's Honour. Baji Rao's victory was followed by another auspicious occurrence. Sawai Jaysingh Rajah of Jaipur, who was a friend of Balaji Vishwanath and knew Baji Rao, succeeded Bangash in the Viceroyalty of Malwa. Jaysingh represented to the Court of Delhi that it was impossible to resist the power of the Peshwa, to whose forces three Moghul Subhedars of Malwa had fallen a victim. As well from policy as from a sincere desire to benefit the Peshwa, Jaysingh handed over the Malwa province with the weak Emperor's consent to Baji Rao and thus extricated himself from a very delicate situation in a very honourable way.†

* I visited Panna on the 15th of December 1930 with letters of introduction from Sir Reginald Glancy and the Hon'ble Colonel R. J. W. Heale to H. H. Maharaja Mahendra Yadavendra Singh Bahadur, the Ruler of Panna, who gave much help to me for *Baji Rao's Life*. Maharajah Chhatrasal divided his kingdom into three parts, giving two to his sons and the third to the Peshwa Baji Rao, whom the venerable Rajah warmly regarded as his third son. Before his death, the Rajah divided the three parts of his territory amongst the three claimants, Baji Rao receiving 39 lakhs worth of territory, while the Maharajah's two sons received districts yielding 32 and 33 lakhs respectively.

—*Vide Life of Maharajah Chhatrasal* by Kunwar Kanaya Ju. I got a good picture of Maharajah Chhatrasal from the Maharaja of Panna and other papers.

—*Vide Sangar-Saraja* by Rai Bahadur Hiralal Ishwardas Deputy Commissioner, Narsingpur, C. P.

† The Chhatrapati Shahu had sent a long letter to the Peshwa, informing him of the troubles raised by the Sidhi and the Portuguese. Hence the Peshwa went in hot haste to the troubled parts and thereafter to pay his homage to the Chhatrapati. Before going there, Baji Rao had wrested Malwa by the force of his arms from the Moghuls and the

In 1735, Baji Rao desired to return to the Deccan to pay his respects to the Chhatrapati who was very highly delighted to hear the details of the Peshwa's glorious victories and his augmented influence. Baji Rao left Sindhia and Holkar in Malwa with explicit orders to invade the Moghul territory as far as the Agra province. Baji Rao then proceeded to the South and on crossing the Godavari, he wrote to Shahu intimating his intention to go to the Western Coast for the chastisement of the Sidhis and the Portuguese.

Baji Rao then entered the Konkan districts in order to put down the disturbances there. The Sidhi Rehman and Yakubkhan joined the Peshwa. Under orders from the Chhatrapati, the Pratinidhi and Fatehsing Bhonsle came to help the Peshwa in the campaign. Baji Rao took the forts of Tala and Ghosale. The Pratinidhi took the fort of Rayagad, the killedar having been already won over by Yakub Khan. A skirmish took place between the Peshwa and the Sidhi Rahyan (brother of Sidhi Rehman) and in this action Rahyan was slain, Baji Rao pursuing the remainder of the Sidhi's force and routing them at Dundirajpuri. Then Baji Rao laid siege to the fort of Janjira, Manaji Angre helping in the siege by attending to the operations from the sea-side. The Sidhi, however, took the earliest opportunity to make overtures for peace to Baji Rao who accepted the terms

[*Continued from page 107.*

Emperor's consent had not much force in it. Baji Rao divided Malwa amongst his Sardars, Holkar, Sindhia, and Pawar.

offered by the Sidhi.* The Peshwa concluded the treaty in 1736 A. D., which provided that the Sidhi Rehman should exercise his authority over Janjira; that he should cede to the Marathas half of the total income of eleven Mahals and that he should deliver the forts of Raygad, Tale and Ghosale, Awachitgarh and Birwadi to the Marathas.

Thus finishing his business at Janjira, Bajirao proceeded to Satara, where his gracious sovereign the Chhatrapati was eagerly waiting for him. The Chhatrapati accorded a very warm welcome to Baji Rao and entrusted the management of the newly acquired territory to the Peshwa. The Chhatrapati held long discussions with Baji Rao. The Chhatrapati heartily offered his felicitation to the victorious Peshwa and readily gave his sanction with regard to the plans of the latter in connection with the subjugation of Hindusthan. Shahu sent Baji Rao on his Hindusthan† expedition with his sincere blessings and high honours.

* The Peshwa had to accomplish greater and more important deeds in the heart of Hindusthan and consequently he thought it a useless waste of time and energy to prosecute the siege of Janjira and to measure his strength with a comparatively insignificant foe like the Sidhi of Janjira. Delhi awaited Baji Rao and so also Rajputana and Agra provinces. The Janjira affair assumed a serious aspect because the Guru of Shahu and the Peshwa, the Saint Brahmendra Swami, was bent on taking revenge by uprooting the Sidhi's power.

† During the years 1734-1735 the Maratha power had become so strong under Baji Rao's leadership and guidance that "the Hindu Reconquest of India" would have been accomplished by the Marathas at that very time if Shahu and his Court had heartily seconded the efforts of Baji Rao. Mr. Sirdesai's observations support our views and are noteworthy:—

Baji Rao's frequent expeditions into the remotest parts of India entailed a very heavy expenditure and increased the debts enormously. This subject need not be discussed in detail here but a mention of it is imperatively necessary. His views on this point are well expressed in the letters he sent to his Guru,* Shree Bramhendra Swami of Dhavadahi. Baji Rao, however, was not daunted by this circumstance, as would appear evident from the way in which he started for Hindusthan. Recent researches from the Peshwa's Daftar show how Baji Rao was equal to the occasion. He surmounted every difficulty by his admirable resourcefulness, far-seeing statesmanship and undaunted courage.

The dissolute Court of Delhi was showing undoubted duplicity in their dealings with Baji Rao who, of course, could not brook that treatment

“मराठ्यांची या वेळीं एवढी सरशी व सामर्थ्य होतें की, शाहूनें व इतर सरदारांनीं बाजीरावांस योग्य पाठवळ दिलें असतें तर सन १७३४-३५ सांत बाजीरावानें विनदिकत दिल्लीचा पाडाव करून, तेथें हिंदुस्तानचाही अनायासें स्वायत्त केली असती, रजपूत राजेही त्यास अनुकूल होते; आणि त्यास अनुकूल करण्याचे प्रयत्न बाजीरावाचे सारखे चालू होते (रोज. २०१-२०२-२०३), परंतु शाहू व सातारचे दरबारकडून बाजीरावाचा पाठ पुरावा झालेला दिसत नाही.”

Sad indeed it is to find that Baji Rao's energy and industry were hampered in this way. Elsewhere we have referred to this subject. Shahu was fickle-minded and his Courtiers unpatriotic.

* *Vide Life of Braharendra Swami* by Parasnis, pages 36-37, Letter No. 30 from Baji Rao to Swami.

from the Court,* made up of drunken debauchees, unscrupulous persons and low favourites. Baji Rao had, therefore, resolved on attacking the Moghul Court† at Delhi. Baji Rao kept his heavy baggage with Rajah Jagdev of Bundelkhand and started in the direction of Delhi. While Baji Rao was in the vicinity of Agra, his officers, Pillaji Jadhav, Malhar Rao Holkar and Vithuji Bule began investigating the districts to the North of the Jumna. The Subhedar of Ayodhya, Sadat Khan, surprised the camp of Holkar and compelled him to remove to the south of the Jumna. This affair was magnified by Sadat Khan into a great victory over the Marathas and a rose-coloured report was sent to the Court‡ at Delhi. Sadat Khan arrived at Agra, where he was shortly joined by Khan Dowran and Meer Kurnuddeen. These three officers combined together in order to defeat the Marathas and brought things to such a pass as to dispense with the Maratha envoy, Dhondopant Purandare.

While these Moghul courtiers were forming their plans, Baji Rao appeared by forced marches

* The Emperor Mahammad Shah and the Vizir Khandowran were ready to grant the demands of Baji Rao made through Sawai Jeysing. But the Turani party in the Court were opposed to the grant to the Marathas.

† The Chhatrapati Shahu had great regard for the Moghul throne at Delhi and Baji Rao had often to grapple with this difficulty. *Vide Poona in Bygone Days* by Rao Bahadur Parasnis.

‡ An important letter from Baji Rao to his brother is published recently, which we have given in the Appendix. It bespeaks the pitiable condition of the Moghul Court as well as Baji Rao's dashing spirit and soaring ambition *Vide Appendix No. 2.*

unexpectedly and suddenly before the gates of Delhi. He announced his arrival to the Emperor by capturing some of the imperial elephants and camels. The next day he wrote two letters, one to the Emperor and the other to Rajah Bakhatmal. The Emperor in his reply requested the Peshwa to send the Maratha envoy back to the Imperial Court. Thinking that the camp of the Maratha army in the vicinity of the city might be a great inconvenience to the citizens of Delhi, Baji Rao removed his camp to the Zeel Talav. This change of place was misinterpreted by the Imperial Court, who thought that the Peshwa was retiring and desired to signalize its power by arranging an attack on the Maratha army. Muzaffar Khan, Mir Hussain Khan, Rajah Shiva Singh and others with a force eight thousand strong began the attack. Baji Rao sent Sutoji Jadhav to reconnoitre the movements of the enemy. As soon as a message was received that the Moghul army was advancing for a battle, the Peshwa ordered Malhar Rao Holkar and Ranoji Rao Sindhia to divide their forces and slowly commence the attack on the enemy. A fierce contest ensued, in which 600 men of the Moghul army were slain on the battlefield, Rajah Shiva Singh being among the number and Meer Hussain Khan Koka being severely wounded. The Marathas captured one imperial elephant and two thousand horses. This action served to make the Emperor and his Court

*Baji Rao's skill in arranging the Maratha forces deserves notice. He drew the imperial army away to a distance from the guns on the ramparts and then began the attack from various sides, inflicting a defeat on the Moghuls.

nervous as well as inclined to sue for peace*. Baji Rao received at this very time a pressing letter from the Chhatrapati to come at once to Satara, as affairs in the Konkan were assuming an alarming aspect. This circumstance prevented the Peshwa from taking full advantage of his Delhi campaign. The overtures for peace from the Emperor were, therefore, duly entertained by the Peshwa, to whom the Emperor gave 13 lacs for the expenses of the campaign and full rights over the Malwa province. The Peshwa's envoy, Dhondopant Purandare, was duly maintained at the Imperial Court.

The Peshwa returned to Satara in 1737 A. D. and after having prolonged discussions with his gracious sovereign the Chhatrapati, Baji Rao prepared to proceed to the Konkan districts to help Manaji Angre against the Portuguese.†

The Portuguese had espoused the cause of Sambhaji Angre, as Manaji Angre had failed to fulfil his promise to cede Colaba to them. This led to hostilities, Manaji Angre soliciting the aid of the Chhatrapati. Baji Rao proceeded to the scene

* *Vide, The Marathas and the Moghuls* by the present writer, p. 70.

† With Shahu's consent Baji Rao had effected a compromise between Sambhaji Angre and Manaji Angre by giving Suwarnadurg with the title of "Serkhel" to the former and by giving Kolaba with the title of "Wajaratnab" to the latter. The Portuguese, however, fomented the enmity between the Angre brothers and hostilities soon followed.

of hostilities, where* the parties were making preparations for deciding the matter by an appeal to arms. Baji Rao studied the whole situation and requested Shahu to appoint Chimnaji Appa as generalissimo of the forces. The Maratha forces met the Portuguese near Colaba, where a battle ensued between the Marathas and the Portuguese. Chimnaji succeeded in inflicting a defeat on the Portuguese, who fled from the battle-field in an extremely disorderly manner. The Peshwa's brother invaded the Sashti district, where the fort of Ghodebunder was taken after a successful night attack on the 6th of April 1737 A. D. The next day the Marathas stopped all communication between Bassein (Wasai) and Sashti. Thana was attacked, when the Portuguese officer, Louis Botello, fled to Karanjya. In Thana, Captain Perreira who repulsed two Maratha attacks, was severely wounded in the third attack and became unfit for service. Thana was at last taken by the Marathas. Chimnaji Appa then thought of a general assault on Bassein. His operations against Bandra, where the Portuguese had received some secret help from the English in Bombay were not successful. Thereafter the operations against the Portuguese required greater attention and were very carefully

* Although Baji Rao's triumph in his expeditions had compelled Sambhaji Angre to act apparently in a friendly way with his brother Manaji Angre yet the former was harbouring secretly a deeprooted ill-will towards the latter. The Portuguese lent a helping hand to Sambhaji. That Sambhaji was exceedingly cunning and unprincipled will be well known from a letter written by him to Baji Rao.

Vide Appendix.

managed by Chimnaji and his trusted officers.* As Baji Rao was called upon to attend to the Delhi affairs where his presence was imperatively required, he had left definite instructions to his brother to carry on the operations with unabated vigour.

We have more than once mentioned how the Nizam took advantage of Baji Rao's frank and noble nature by repeatedly breaking his promises and raising difficulties in the path of Maratha advance. The weak Emperor Mahammad Shah led by the counsels of his courtiers, summoned the Nizam to Delhi for preparing against the advance of the Maratha power. The Nizam's son Gagi-uddin was appointed Subhedar of Malwa and Guzerath. The Nizam was pressed to collect as much force as he could to face the rising power of Baji Rao. Safdar Jung, father of Suja ud-dowla, and the Rajah of Kotah were appointed to protect the rear of the Moghul army. The Nizam zealously attended to the various details of this expedition and crossed the Jumna to enter the Doab, whence he proceeded to Kalpi. Thence he arranged to take the Rajahs of Bundelkhand with him and entered the Malwa province, which was to be the theatre of hostilities. Baji Rao was fully informed of his old rival's movements and prepared with equal earnestness to baffle the cunning dissembler's hopes. He crossed the Narbada, when he came

*The fatal feuds between the brothers Manaji and Sambhaji Angre went a long way in ruining the power and prestige of the Marathas in Maharashtra. Had they behaved in accordance with the compromise effected by Baji Rao, the naval power of the Marathas would not have suffered so much.

to know that the Nizam was encamped at Sironj in Hadoti. At no distant date the two contending parties came face to face at Tal Bhopal in Malwa. The Nizam had selected the fort* of Bhopal and the adjoining plain for the camp of his army. In the first action, which took place between the Marathas and the Moghuls, the latter were led by the son of Jaysingh aided by the Bundella cavalry and other Rajputs. Five hundred Rajputs were killed and the Marathas captured seven hundred horses. Pillaji Jadhav, Malhar Rao Holkar and Ranoji Rao Sindhia led the Maratha forces in this action under the direct supervision of Baji Rao. The Peshwa was eagerly waiting for the Nizam who, thinking discretion to be the better part of valour, did not come out of the fort to take part in the action. The Peshwa blockaded the Moghuls, cutting off their supplies. Malhar Rao Holkar and Yeshwantrao Powar attacked the party sent for bringing in provisions under Safdar Jung and the Rajah of

*Although the Emperor was thoroughly displeased with the Nizam for his faithless conduct and desertion, the extraordinary advance of the Marathas under Baji Rao greatly alarmed the imperial Court and the emperor. The Nizam feared that the displeasure of the Emperor might deprive him of the Subhedari of the Deccan and that to please Baji Rao the emperor might appoint the Peshwa as Subhedar of the Deccan. So, to avoid this disaster the Nizam applied to the emperor offering his services for curbing the Marathas. Mahomed Shah sanctioned the Nizam's offer, though the emperor heartily hated the Nizam. The fear of the Marathas had softened the emperor's hatred for Nizam-ul-mulk, who came to Delhi on 22nd June 1737. Mr. Kincaid well observes on this subject : "The emperor and his Court vied with each other in their deference to the pardoned rebel (Asaf Shah the Nizam)." Vol. II, P. 230.

Kotah, both of whom were sadly repulsed, 150 of their party being killed. The Nizam was hemmed in on all sides.* At last he came out of the fort of Bhopal and slowly proceeded towards Sironj, harrassed incessantly by the Maratha army. Somehow he reached Durrai Sarai near Sironj, where he unconditionally submitted to a humiliating treaty. The operations in the famous battle of Bhopal lasted from 13th December 1737 to 8th January 1738 A. D. Baji Rao gives a vivid description of the condition of the Moghuls, their unconditional surrender and submission to a treaty in an important letter to his brother Chimnaji Appa:—

“.....ते फौज (दक्षिणेतून नासिरजंगाकडून मागविलेली मदत) येऊन सामील झाली तर नबाब मारी होईल याकरिता फौजांस अडकाव होय तें करणें. तुम्हांस जे फौज मिळेल ते जमा करून मारी राहणें; दामादे, बांटे आमचेकडे आले नसले तरी तुम्ही आपणाजवळ बोलावून सामील करणें. रा. स्वामीस विनंति करून फतेसिंग बाबा, शंभूसिंग जाधवराव सरलंकर व जाधव आणविणें. रा. स्वामीजवळ जो आपला जमाव आहे, तो आपणाजवळ आणणें. त्याखेरीज मील-तीळ ते लोक जमा करणें. नबाब ठिकाणीं राहिल्यावर अवधी दक्षिण निवेंच होईल. या समयीं अन्नधान्यानीं या कामांत चित्त बालावें. राणोजी मोसले आम्हाकडे आले तरी बरें, नाहीतर तुम्ही त्यांस गांठणें. बडलांचे व खावंडांचे पुण्यानें नबाबास पेतव आहे. जें होणें तें घन्याचें प्राक्तन व बडिलांचे पुण्येकरून उत्तमच होईल. आपल्याकडील लोक सारे सुखरूप आहेत. पुढें नबाबास भोपाळ येथें राहाणें

*The Peshwa Baji Rao's letter in connection with this battle are most interesting. The Peshwa writes to his Guru Shri Brahmendra Swami about the Bhopal affairs, saying that the Nizam is in the same miserable condition as was Mahomod Bungush. To his brother Chimnaji Appa Baji Rao sends most noteworthy details about the pitiable condition of Asaf Jah the Nizam and his army, asking Chimnaji to obstruct the advance of any force that may be coming to the Nizam's help from the Deccan. *Vide Brahmendra Swami's Life by Parasnis, pages 47-56.*

दुःसह होऊन तो फौजेचा कंपू करून निघून जाऊ लागला. परंतु नाकेबंदीमुळे दागा महर्ग झाला. गवत तो न मिळेसारखे झाले. कालपासून आबापावेतो नबाब उमेच केले आहेत. नबाब व फौज सत्तहीन झाली आहे. दागा, गळा, घांस, लकडी बंद केली, एक रुपयास एक शेर अन्न झाले. तेंही कोणास प्राप्त कोणास अप्राप्त. बोरी पळसाचा पाला खाऊ लागली. परवा (६ जानेवारी) मोगल पठाणींनी माळ्याचे बैल खाले. रजपुतांस तो केवळ उपास पडू लागले. नबाबानीं सर्वांचे दुःख पाहून बहुतेक काहिल होऊन, सज्जवाविशीं त्वरा केली. आनंदराव पंढित सुमंत नबाबापाशीं होते. त्यांस त्यांनीं बोलीचालीचा संदर्भ सांगून आम्ही पिलाजी जाधव, बाजीराव व बाबूराव मल्हार यांस त्यांच्या वकिलाकडे लष्करापुढे ठेकडी होती तेथे पाठविले. बोलीचालीचा ठराव केला. माळ्या दरोबस्त जहागीर मुमेदारीचे यादीवरी दरक्त करून दिले. द्रव्यही साधेल तें बादशाहापासून घेवो गोविंद याचे पहिले बोलीप्रमाणें करून देऊं ऐसें दस्तकानिशीं याद करून दिली. या प्रसंगीं निजामास संबंद बुडवावयाची संधी बाजीरावास प्राप्त झाली नाही. नबाबचा तोफखाना जबरदस्त होता. शिवाय रोहिळे, बुंदेले, रजवाडे यांची त्यास मदत होती. हा अर्थ व तुम्हीं कित्येक विचार लिहिला तो चित्तांत आणून सौर-स्थानाचा प्रसंग संपादिला. जो नबाब बीबाई, सरदेशमुखीचीं नांवें घेत नव्हता, त्यांनीं माळ्यां दरोबस्त ऐसें खास दस्तकानें लिहितां उच्चार केला कीं या मार्गे कधीच गोष्ट न झाली ते या प्रसंगीं झाली. पुत्रान्वे नांव पुढेवारी करून समायमें आणलें त्या माळ्याची दरोबस्त सनद करून देतो. नबाबाच्या चित्तांत कल्पांत धासा, परंतु काय करील, संकटाचा प्रसंग देखोन शाबें लगळे. आप्ता, स्वामीचें तपोबल, वकिलांचें पुण्य समर्थ, म्हणोनच ही गोष्ट बहून झाली. आज पादशाहीत नबाबासारखा दुसरा अमीर कोण आहे ? अतःपर नबाब दिव्डीस जातील व बंदो-बस्त कर्तव्य तैसा केल्यावर होईल तें वर्तमान लिहून पाठवूं. करार झाला यांत अंतर न करावें, अशी मनरोटी नबाबानें दिली.”

On the 11th February 1738 A. D. (24 days after the first attack of Baji Rao on the Nizam) the old rival of the Peshwa came to his knees and begged for peace before the Peshwa. Again the noble-hearted Peshwa allowed his antagonist to escape, though after humiliating him to a great ex-

tent. The Nizam agreed to give whatever Bajji Rao demanded. The whole of Malwa, together with all the territory lying between the Chambal and the Jumna was taken by Bajji Rao to whom moreover the Nizam promised to give fifty lacs for the expenses of the expedition. For some time Bajji Rao remained in these parts to collect the tribute from the neighbouring chiefs and to strengthen his friendly relations with the Rajput Princes.

While Bajji Rao was victorious in Hindusthan his brother was subduing the Portuguese in the Konkan districts and the Maratha Sirdar, Raghuji Bhonsle was extending the Maratha power in Eastern India. Bhonsle invaded the Cuttack and Allahabad provinces and killed the Subhedar Sujak Khan in a skirmish. Raghuji brought enormous wealth from the provinces,* though he gave no share of it to the Chhatrapati nor he had obtained Chhatrapati's permission to undertake the said expedition. This gave much annoyance to Bajji Rao who always insisted that the Chhatrapati Shahu's authority should ever be respected.

Bajji Rao returned to Poona after his memorable expedition of 1738 A. D. to Hindusthan. It was always the policy of Bajji Rao to consult his

*Raghuji Bhonsle was a capable person but the spirit of defiance displayed by him led to much trouble, obstructing the advance of the Maratha power in Bengal and leading to internecine feuds which led to open appeals to arms and waste of energy. The Peshwa had to solicit the Chhatrapati to check this spirit of Raghuji. This lack of national spirit and irregular procedure often impeded the advance of the Marathas. Selfish views prevailed over the general interests of the State and the Peshwas had frequently to solve this problem in later times.

gracious sovereign the Chhatrapati on all important subjects. This led to some waste of time and energy, but the Peshwa's policy was sound in principle. The Chhatrapati was extremely pro-Moghul, being brought up under the kind care of the Begum Saheba and this circumstance always hindered Baji Rao's plans of extirpating the decaying Moghul power as soon as it was possible. The noble-hearted Chhatrapati counselled mild measures and disliked any direct insult to the throne at Delhi, though Baji Rao's eloquence and arguments had made the Chhatrapati quite prepared for admitting that the Maratha power must, sooner or later, engulf the Moghul Empire.

Baji Rao left Poona early in 1739 A. D. to adjust affairs with Raghuji Bhonsle and to bring his refractory conduct to book by impressing on him the necessity of obeying the Chhatrapati's authority. The Peshwa's vanguard was led by Awaji Kaware, who entered Berar. Raghuji Bhonsle attacked Awaji Kaware and routed him in the February of 1739 A. D. This was another and fresh instance of Raghuji Bhonsle's disregard of the authority of Chhatrapati under whose orders and consent Baji Rao planned all his expeditions. It became imperatively necessary to subdue this spirit in Raghuji Bhonsle and Baji Rao started for the purpose in right earnest. On his way thither, the Peshwa heard of the invasion of Delhi by Nadir Shah, about Khandowran's death on the battle-field and Sadat Khan's being taken prisoner. The noblest thoughts of patriotism and chivalry stirred Baji Rao's mind, and his letters fully bear testimony to his sentiments. Baji Rao was extremely eager to cross swords with the Persians and with that laud-

able and patriotic aim he proceeded with all possible haste as far as Nasirabad, fully determined to fight the Persians and save India from their encroachments. *Baji Rao's trusted officers Sindhia and Holkar were sent by Chimnaji Appa after the fall of Bassein in May 1739 A. D. to join the Peshwa in the expedition† against Nadir Shah. But at Nasirabad Baji Rao heard that Nadir Shah had left Delhi in haste,‡ placing Mahammad Shah on the throne after having disgraced himself by a ruthless massacre of the helpless citizens and looting the citizens and the Imperial Treasury of every valuable and precious article.

It appears that the Nizam-ul-mulk and Sadat Khan had been instrumental in calling Nadir Shah to India to augment their power and influence by ruining Khandowran, as the following extract shows:—

“निजामने व सादतखानने मिलून नादिरशहा खानदौरास मारायास आणिला.
खानदौरान मरतांच महंमदशहा आणून भेटविला. सादतखान हाही फिरबिण्यास

* Baji Rao has extorted the historian's tribute for his extraordinary promptness and patriotism in preparing the Maratha's for attacking Nadir Shah. Says Mr. Kincaid, the historian of the Marathas: "But so great were the resources of Baji Rao that he could provide both an army to besiege Bassein and another large enough to drive Nadir Shah from Delhi."

† "On the 14th June the King (Chhatrapati Shahu) in open Durbar proclaimed that Nadir Shah through fear of the Marathas had fled the country"—*Kincaid*, vol. II, P. 261.

‡ "The departure of the Persians was hastened by fear of the Marathas then ably ruled by Baji Rao, the second Peshwa"—*Martins British India*.

"The Peshwa (Baji Rao) was not dismayed when he heard that a hundred thousand Persians were advancing towards the South."—*Grant Duff*.

दिखीस गेला. परंतु कपट सिद्धीस जात नाही. सादतखान तर खानेजंगीत जखमी होऊन दुसरे दिवशीं मृत्यु पावळे. निजाम बाबळे. पण मृत्युहून निघेव झालें. खेंचरावर बसून दरबारास जावें. दखिणेंत अंमळ उठला. स्वामीसच गस्य आले. आतां विपत्तीनें मरणही पावेल. राजांचे मनीं राणाजीस दिखीत तख्ती बैसवावें. इत्यादि इ. यावरून नादिरशाहास आगण्याचें कारस्थान निजामाचें असून तें त्यास कसें मोवळें हें दिसून येतें. बाकी बादशहा व बजीर खानदौरान बाजीराबास अलुकूल होते. उदेपुरच्या राण्यास दिखीस तख्तावर बसवावें असाही विचार जाळलेला होता. तोच वकीळ आणखी पुढें लिहितो. 'मुख्य गोष्ट स्वामीचें आगमनावरी आहे. सेवक नित्य नित्य राणाजीस सांगतां कीं रा. भाऊ कुच वरकुच येतात.' परंतु ऐसें सांगतां सांगतां दोन मास जाळे. हिंदु राजे सर्व सवाई आदीकून स्वामीचे स्वारीची प्रतिक्षा करतात. स्वामीचें पुष्टीबळ होतांच जाट वगैरे फौज दिल्लीवरी पाठवून सवाईजी आपणही जाणार ऐशी तजवीब आहे.'*

Baji Rao heartily desired to have an opportunity of measuring his strength with the Persians. Under Baji Rao's leadership Sawai Jaysing of Jai-pur wished to effect a radical change in the affairs of Delhi. The Peshwa had already resolved to spread his Hindu army from the Nerbada to the Jumna. The hasty departure of the Shah precluded the possibility of an encounter between the Hindu princes headed by Baji Rao and Nadir Shah.

Our readers may be interested to read that before leaving Delhi in haste, Nadir Shah spat on

*The attitude assumed by Sawai Jaysingh at this time is remarkable. All the Rajputana princes were awaiting Baji Rao's arrival and help and depended on him for their future conduct. The reference in the letter, above quoted, to placing the Maha Rana of Udaipur on the throne at Delhi is also an index of the aims and aspirations of the Hindu combination going on in Rajputana, aided by Baji Rao's triumphant policy and valour.

the face of Nizam-ul-mulk (Chinkilich Khan) and Sadat Khan and drove both of them disgracefully from his presence calling both of them* Nimuk Harām (faithless to their master, the Emperor Mahammad Shah).

Baji Rao spent some time in strengthening his good relations with the Rajput princes. The Peshwa's laudable exertions in bringing about an union† between the Maratha's and the Rajput Princes deserve special attention. It was a master-

**Vide Appendix*, where we have given an extract from Dow's *History of India* from the Persian sources. The cruelties committed by Nadir Shah have already been referred to in the preceding pages. It was indeed an extremely sad affair, a disgrace to humanity.

†Our readers should remember that Baji Rao's illustrious father, the Peshwa Balaji Vishwanath had formed intimate and cordial relations with the great princes of Rajputana, all of whom sympathised with their Hindu brethren of Maharashtra in resisting indirectly the power of the Moghul Emperor. The following extract will be interesting in this connection:—

“महाराष्ट्रांतून बाहेर पडून मर्मदेच्या पलीकडे मराठ्यांनी प्रवेश केल्याबरोबर त्यांचा संबंध रजपूत राजांशी आला. रजपूत राजांस धीरंगजेबाचें अत्यंत दुखाविलें होतें; आणि दक्षिणेंत औरंगजेबाचा मराठ्यांनी जो उच्छेद केल्याबरोबर रजपूतांस आनंद होऊन मराठ्यांनी सय्यदांचें द्वारें दिखीत प्रवेश केल्या; तेव्हां त्यांजबद्दल सामान्यतः रजपूतांना सहानुभूति वाढत होती. बादशाहीच्या या पडत्या काळांत रजपूत राजेही आपली राज्यें वादघीत होते. चवगाई, सरदेसमुखीचे ह्मण मराठ्यांस मिळाल्या बद्दल रजपूतांस आनंदच झाला. अकबराच्या वेळेप्रमाणें यावेळीं रजपूतांचे बादशहास साहा असतें तर दिखीत मराठ्यांचा रिशवा झाला नसता.”

Balaji Vishwanath's wise policy was very scrupulously followed by his able son and the Maratha power received great accession of strength from the hearty help of their Rajput brethren during the career of Baji Rao.

piece of policy worthy of notice, when the intrigues of the Nizam are taken into consideration. The Bundella Princes were on intimate terms with Baji Rao who formed a secret compact with them for mutual help and cooperation.* While the Peshwa was engaged in this way in forming a formidable combination for extirpating the power of the Moghul generally, and that of Nizam-ul-mulk especially, he received secret letters from Meer Asad Ali† to come to the Karnatic, where the Peshwa's aid was solicited by the Vazeer. But Baji Rao was prevented from undertaking the Karnatic campaign on account of the machinations set on foot by Damaji Gaekwad and Raghuji Bhonsle, both of whom were brave but always led away by evil advisors like the Nizam. The Peshwa, however, chanced to meet Raghuji Bhonsle at no distant date when the Karnatic affairs were discussed and Baji Rao succeeded in persuading Bhonsle‡ to

*In 1709 Jeysingh and Ajeetsingh formed a combination against the Moghul Emperor. Amar Singh of Udaipur heartily approved of the object with which Jeysingh and Ajeet Singh had undertaken the task of resisting the Moghuls. The Rajputs resolved never to marry their daughters with the Moghul Princes. The Rajputs invited the aid of the Marathas in this undertaking. The friendship between Balaji Vishwanath and the Rajput Princes was regarded as an accession of strength to the noble cause undertaken by Amarsingh, Jeyasingh and Ajeetsingh. Colonel Todd does not seem to be accurate in his adverse criticism on the subject. The future conduct of the Maratha's (1786 1794) cannot justify Todd's remarks. Balaji Vishwanath, Baji Rao, and Balaji Baji Rao were very friendly with the Rajputs. *Vide Todd's Rajasthon*

†Meer Asad was Vazir of Safdar Ali, the Nawab of Arcot.

‡Raghuji Bhonsle received definite instructions from the Chhatrapati in this connection as well as in regard to his keeping good relations with Baji Rao.

undertake the expedition, in which much wealth was likely to be obtained.

After sending Raghujī Bhonsle to the Karnatic, Baji Rao engaged himself in attacking Nasir Jung second son of the Nizam, who had collected a large army and was molesting the Maratha territory. The war against Nasir Jung was of no avail, and both parties came to terms at Mungi Paithan,* whereby it was agreed that the contending parties should not molest each other's territory.†

After thus concluding the hostilities with Nasir Jung, Baji Rao again started on his expedition to Hindusthan with his unbending resolution to extend the Maratha power and influence. Fate,

*It was at this time that Baji Rao received Khargone Battishi and Handia districts as a Nazar personally to the Peshwa from the Nizam, who had promised the cession of these Districts at the time of the Treaty after the battle of Palkhed in 1728. A. D.

†How Baji Rao's exertions for the expansion of the Maratha Empire were hampered by opposition from selfish Sirdars like the Pratinidhi and Fattesingh Bhonsle, would be known in detail to our readers by a perusal of Mr. Sirdesai's *Marathi Riyasat*.

“प्रतिनिधी व फत्तेसिंग भोसले बाजीरावाचे विरुद्ध असून पुढे रघुजी भोसले त्यांस सामील होऊन त्रिकूट बनले, त्या योगाने राज्याची कामे कधी बिघडत गेली आणि त्यामुळे शाहूची कधी त्रेधा उडत असे हे रोजनिशीतील कित्येक उल्लेखांवरून व्यक्त होतें....सारांश अशा विकट परिस्थितीतून बाजीरावा-नेच निवामास तैबी शोचवून शाहूस निर्घोस्त केले....चार वर्षांच्या कारभारांत शाहूच जुन्या सरदारांची करामत करून बुकली व त्याचा विश्वास बाजीरावाच्या कर्तृत्वावर हट झाला.” Vol. I, pp. 207-213.

“...दरबारांत बुकली नसती तर किंवा सर्व सरदारांस एका कार्यभागांत गोवणारी राजसंघटना चालू असती तर बाजीरावाने शिबीर कानीज करून हिंदुपद पातशाहीवर शाहूच नेऊन बसविले असतें....” *Ibid.*, p. 145.

however, ordained that this should be the heroic Peshwa's last expedition! He reached the banks of the sacred Narbada in Raver Pargana, where he had high fever, probably due to over exertion. He was advised to desist from bathing in the Narbada, while he was indisposed, but the advice fell on deaf ears. To the last day of his life he continued to bathe in the holy waters of the Narbada. His iron constitution, at last, succumbed to the high fever, though his undaunted spirit never gave way till the last moments of his life.* When he found that this was to be his last illness, he summoned his trusted and faithful officers, Ranoji Rao Sindhia, Malhar Rao Holkar and others to his bed side and advised them to carry on his schemes till their fruition and to release the Hindus from "the tyranny of the Moghuls."† He also gave valuable

* *Vide Banoji Rao Sindhia* by the present writer, page 25:—"The Peshwa resembled in many ways the great Macedonian monarch Alexander."

†In his *Marathi Riyasat* Vol II, Mr. Sirdesai has made very sagacious observations regarding the absence of a national sentiment amongst the Maratha's generally. There was appreciable patriotism and national spirit in Maharashtra during the days of Shivaji. Baji Rao I was influenced and guided by that spirit, but on the whole, the absence of genuine patriotism, national spirit and the ideas of a common purpose were certainly absent, as Mr. Sirdesai rightly complains :—

"...जेथे आत्मात्याच्या कारस्थानाचा विस्तार सुरामच केला आहे. त्यावरून घराट मंडळांच्या मनोभाषनांची बरीच कल्पना करता येते. आपण एक राष्ट्र आहो, आणि सर्वांनी मिळून हिंदुस्थानावर आपले राज्य स्थापन करावयाचें आहे ही कल्पना थोड्या बहुत चालकांच्या मनांत कितीही असखी, तरी सामान्य महाराष्ट्र जनतेच्या मनांत ही राष्ट्रीय भावना निलकूळ नव्हती. स्वायं घावेक ते

advice as to the way in which the Maratha affairs should be controlled and conducted. He exhorted his officers not to mourn his death, and never to allow this circumstance to slacken the onward march of the Maratha Power. In the morning of the 28th of April 1740 A. D. the ever victorious Baji Rao peacefully breathed his last at Kakde in the Raver District on the holy Narbada, his mental faculties remaining unimpaired to the last.*

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कृत्य करभ्यास मराठे मंडळापैकीं बहुतेक सर्वे व्यक्ती नेहमीच तयार असत. मग ते ब्राह्मण असोत वा ब्राह्मणेंतर असोत, राजारामाचे वेळेस काय प्रकार द्याव्याचे विवेचन पूर्वी केलेच आहे. तोच प्रकार बाजीरावाचे वेळेस होता. आतां नावा साहेबांच्या वेळेसही तोच विसून येतो, आणि मराठा शाहीच्या धर्मेरी पर्यंत तो आणखीही पुढे पुष्कळां पहाण्यास सापडेल. ज्या रामचंद्रपंतानें औरंगजेबाशी लढण्याची शिकस्त केली, त्याचा प्रत्यक्ष मुलगा, तोही चांगला कर्ता व शहाणा असून राजरोसपणें निजामास मिळण्याची तयारी करतो, ज्या निजामाचें निर्मूलन करण्यांत शाहूनें व बाजीरावानें शिकस्त केली, त्या निजामाचा आश्रय करण्याची इच्छा, ऐन पद्धत्या काळांत तोच रामचंद्रपंताचा मुलगा धरण करतो, यावरून मराठे लोकांची मनोरचना उत्कृष्टपणें विसून येते. ”

* There is a "Chatree" of Baji Rao on the Narbada. The Holkar State pays an annual sum of Rs. 120 for its upkeep. An interesting account of this "Chatree" is given in the Indore State Gazetteer. There is now a celebration of Baji Rao's anniversary every year at Raver Khadi. Much credit is due to the late Mr. B. N. Bhajekar and Sirdar M. V. Kibe, M.A., Hon. Mr. Y. M. Kale, Sirdar S. B. Chagan, and others for their exertions in organizing this anniversary celebration in honour of the memory of this great Peshwa. Some account is given later on in this work.

It would be difficult to do full justice to the life-work of this heroic Peshwa within the limited scope of this work. The subject is so important that a separate volume must be devoted for an exhaustive description of the chivalrous career of this great and patriotic maker of the Maratha nation.*

Next to the illustrious Shivaji, Baji Rao is the only personage in Maratha History, whose views and patriotic career deserve to be most carefully studied. A hearty tribute of applause is justly due from every Indian to this gallant Peshwa who had a head to contrive and a hand to execute gigantic plans; who, in spite of jealous and short-sighted domestic opposition, prevailed upon the Chhatrapati Shahu to sanction the great schemes which he successfully carried through; who timely availed himself of the golden opportunity by extending the Maratha power and prestige in India and left

* Mrs. Flora Annie Steel gives probably the best description of Baji Rao in her *India through the Ages*, page 237:—
"Now there is no doubt that this son by name Baji Rao, is after Shivaji, by far the ablest Maratha of History. He was a warrior, born and bred in camps, a statesman educated ably by his father, a man frank and free, hardy beyond most, content to live on a handful of unhusked grain, vital to the finger tips. He found himself confronted by a peace party (Pratinidhi and others), who would fairly have paused to consolidate what had already been won, to suppress civil discord and generally to give a firm administrative grip on the south of India before attempting further conquest on the north. But Baji Rao was clear sighted. He saw the difficulties of this policy. To attempt the consolidation of what was still absolutely fluid would be fatal. He roused the lazy, somewhat luxurious Shahu to such enthusiasm that he swore that he would plant his victorious flag on the holy Himalaya."

an undying and glorious impression on Indian History by his irresistible career of success; who showed by his work and colossal influence that the "Maratha Empire" was a reality and not a misnomer;* and that the Maratha spear was capable of the highest achievements respected throughout India.

During his short regime, he enlarged the boundaries of the Maratha kingdom to an enormous extent and from Delhi to the Tungabhadra his victorious spear was feared and respected. The whole of his time was taken up in the furtherance of his mighty schemes and in this work he was unaided and alone. The other counsellors in the Rajah's Court were either apathetic or jealous of Baji Rao and hence much harm was done to the onward march of the Maratha power. Had the Courtiers of the king supported Baji Rao, the 'Hindu-Pad-Padshahi' would have been firmly founded by the great Peshwa long before 1736, as observed by us elsewhere.

The views of this Peshwa and his pitiable state of indebtedness are discussed sometimes with great force by the Peshwa himself in his letters to the venerable saint Shree Bramhendra Swami of

* *Vide The Marathas and the Moghals* by the present writer, pp. 67-72.

Govindrao Ballal Chitnis' *Bakkar of Shahu Chhatrapati* says as follows :—

“बाजीराव बाळाळ पेशवे वैसाख शु. ११ कैलासवासी झाले. महाराजांच्या कार बाईट वाटले. तीन दिवस चाचणा बंध होता. कचेरी नाही. उदास मर्जी राहिली, नंतर बाळाजी बाजीराव ऊर्फ नावासाहेब यांच पेशवाईची वज्रें दिडी. मोठ समारंभ झाला.”

Dhawadshi* who was to Bajī Rao what Shree Ramdas Swami was to Shivaji. In short, the whole life of this Peshwa was spent in the field and in the service of the Maratha cause which he upheld and carried to success in the face of open and subterranean foes. Bajī Rao was a Hindu of the Hindus and like Shivaji, an enthusiastic deliverer† of the Hindus from the Moghul "Zulum." Bajī Rao's cousin (his mother's brother's son) Baburao Malhar Burway was the Peshwa's Vakil at Delhi and his letters are so full of detailed information as to repay perusal and throw abundant light on this subject. The said letters point out how Bajī Rao guided the course of events by his praiseworthy vigilance and prudence. They show unequivocally that Bajī Rao, one of the bravest and most successful soldiers, was also a great and watchful statesman. Bajī Rao was always in touch with the pulse of the Maratha soldiers and

*The Subject of Bajī Rao's indebtedness owing to the enormous military expenditure need not excite much wonder. The Peshwa's officers, Malhar Rao Holkar, Ranoji Rao Sindhia, Pawar, Gaikwad, Jadhav, Bundele, Ramchandra Bahu Suktankar and others became enormously rich when Bajī Rao's exertions bore fruit after his death. The Peshwa was in embarrassment and so were his officers up to 1740. Bajī Rao's letters to the revered saint of Dhawadshi are given in the appendix as they show the Peshwa's difficulties and financial distress. It was during the years 1744-59 that the Peshwa Nanasahab and his Sirdars reaped the fruit of Bajī Rao's labours and became rich.

†Bajī Rao's life-work is briefly summed up in the following short but most significant sentence :—

"दौलतीत काही हाकत नसतां लौकिक नसतच केला. मुख्य गोष्ट राजश्री रावसाहेब पुण्यवंत बाहुळें यश येतें."—*Vide Rajwade's Khand Vol. II 7.*

it is owing to this noteworthy circumstance that several states like Gwalior, Indore, Dhar, Dewas and others came into existence during the heroic regime of this great Peshwa who appreciated merit in his officers wherever and whenever he found it irrespective of any prejudices of caste, creed or colour.*

On page 397 of his *Marathi Riyasat*, Mr. Sirdesai criticizes the capability ('कर्मगरी') of Baji Rao, because he could not pay off the debt of twenty lacs of rupees contracted on account of the heavy military expenditure, though his officers, Sindhia, Holkar, Gaikwad, Pawar, Jadhav, Bundele and others had become, as the learned scholar rather inaccurately says, enormously rich. With all due deference to this learned scholar, I beg to assert that that view is neither accurate nor fully justified by the real state of affairs. Up to the year 1740, Baji Rao had been ceaselessly active in establishing the Maratha rule in Malwa, Bundel-Khand, and the districts about Agra and Delhi. In fact, Baji Rao had not only to bear the brunt of the contest but to guide and train his Sirdars in the Herculean task of coping with the might of the Moghuls. Even Mr. Keene has frankly and ungrudgingly admitted that Baji Rao was "the first to show the path by which afterwards Mahadaji Sindhia rose to greatness." It was, indeed, a gigantic task. But Baji Rao's undaunted spirit surmounted all difficulties. Up to the year 1740, neither Holkar nor Sindhia nor Govindpant Bundele had been in a satisfactory or sound financial condition. On

*A list was published in the *Itihas Sangraha* showing that Baji Rao was above caste prejudice.

August 29, 1740 Malhar Rao Holkar writes to his Guru Shree Bramhendra Swami Dhawadshikar as follows about his pitiable financial stress:—

“यानंतर आम्हाकडील सविस्तर वर्तमान तर आच दोन वर्षे मुलुबगिरी जहाली. कोटून पैसा मिळत नाही; कर्जवान खात प्रसंग तो चालवावा कष्टा....”

Translation:—These two years have been spent in expeditions; money has come from no quarters; we had to face the occasions, though indebted.)

These are plain words. In a letter to the same revered Swami, dated 17th, September 1733, Malhar Rao Holkar said:—

“येदा कर्जाविशीं फारसी मोठ झाली. परिहार करणार स्वामी समर्थ आहेत.”
(*Translation*:—This year has been one of great financial difficulty due to debt. The Swami is able to tide over the difficulty.)

In another letter Malhar Rao Holkar speaks in the same strain. In the letters written to his Guru, Holkar had, of course, said the truth. More or less, the same condition confronted Sindbia because Baji Rao never rested nor allowed his officers to take rest until the conquest of Malwa and Bundelkhand was accomplished. Expeditions (मुलुबगिरी) required heavy expenditure. There was no other alternative than to borrow from the Sowkars to pay off the soldiery. Without payments effective service would have been impossible. Under the circumstances, the debts of Baji Rao, though heavily preying on his mind, need not be viewed in any unfavourable light. On the contrary, it is but due to this great Peshwa to say that his ceaseless labours opened up the rich Moghul provinces to the Marathas and made the stream of wealth flow towards the south from Rajputana, Bundelkhand, Agra and Delhi. Baji Rao's debts

cannot, therefore, supply any data for detracting from the undoubted worth and unimpeachable work of that great and heroic Peshwa.*

The best testimony to Baji Rao's life-work is furnished by his great rival, the Nizam Asaf Jah who, with tears in his eyes, exclaimed in the anguish of his heart when the news of Baji Rao's death reached him that throughout his long life, he had not seen "a braver or more merciful or abler person than the Peshwa Baji Rao." It falls to the lot of few persons to be so highly admired after death even by their friends, much less by their rivals† or political opponents. Asaf Jah had the capacity to admire Baji Rao.

* In his letter to the Swami, Baji Rao alludes to the wealthy condition of Dabhade, Gaikwad and Bande but not to that of Sindhia, Holkar or Govindpant Bundele; (*Vide* letter No. 32, *Life of Bramhendra Swami* by Parasnis). Dabhade, Gaikwad and Bande were disposed to act independently of the Peshwa and received due punishment for their greedy and selfish actions. Sindhia, Holkar and Bundele were true to the general interests of the Maratha State and always devoted to the Peshwa. Rao Bahadur Parasnis has well criticised the selfish tendency of Dabhade, Gaikwad and Bande.

† We have pleasure in giving the following estimate of Baji Rao's career by Mr. C. G. Gogate:—

“ शिवाजीच्या मार्गे नॉब येण्यासारखा पराक्रमी वीर बाजीरावच झाला. असा स्वदेशाचे प्रौढ बालगणारा, इज्जतदार, शाहाणा, शूर नरवीर त्याच्या मागून कोणीही निपवला नाही. तो अल्पवयस्क वारल्यामुळे त्याचा मुख्य हेतु तबीस गेला नाही; तथापि त्याचे नांव हिंदुस्थानच्या ह्या टोकापासून त्या टोकापर्यंत सारखे गाजत होते; त्यानें सर्व हिंदुस्थानभर आपल्या नांवाचा सारखा बराच बसविला होता; आणि त्यानें हिंदूचो बाजो राखून आपणास गाजो म्हणवून घेतले.

Baji Rao died a heroic death as enjoined by saint Ramdas Swami, leaving behind him an everlasting fame not only in Maharashtra but the whole of India and his name remains enshrined in the pages of History as one of the greatest and most successful leaders of nations in this world,* who died in harness and who knew no defeat and was afraid of nobody.

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अथच्या २० वर्षांच्या कारकीर्दीत तो सर्व लोकांच्या जिवाला चटका लावून गेला ! एकंदरीने पुढील ओशीत जसे वामण्याविषयी साधूंचा बोध आहे, तसेच त्याच्या हातून घडले यांत संशय नाही.

कावा बहुत कष्टवादी । उजळ कीर्ति उरवावी ॥

चटक आवुनी सोबावी । काही एक ॥ १ ॥ रामदास.

**Vide Modern Review*, December number 1912. Babu Satyabrat Mukerji has described in a glowing and graphic style the achievements of Baji Rao and has made some pertinent observations.

".....Baji Rao's name was, doubtless, a terror to all parties. When left to himself, Baji Rao handled any situation with consummate skill; but he was hampered at every step by selfish intriguers....."

CHAPTER VIII

BALAJI BAJI RAO *alias* NANASAHEB

(1740-1748 A.D.)

The news of Baji Rao's death broke the heart of the sagacious, kind-hearted but easeloving Chhatrapati Shahu. It fell like a thunderbolt on Chimnaji Appa and Nanasaheb, both of whom were in the Konkan districts helping Manaji Angre, against whom his brother Sambhaji had again risen in arms and had taken the forts of Chowle, Alibag, Sagargad, Tale and others. The grief of Kasibai and other members of the family beggars description. In fact, Baji Rao, the pride, the hope, the joy of Maharashtra, left the whole country in a mood of the severest sadness, his rivals vying with his friends and admirers in bemoaning the irreparable loss. Chimnaji Appa and Nanasaheb went to Satara to pay their respects to the Chhatrapati who endeavoured to offer as much consolation to them as was possible under the circumstances. The gracious Chhatrapati conferred the dignity of Peshwa, in spite of all opposition,* on the eldest son of

* Nanasaheb wrote to his spiritual guide, the famous saint Narayan Dixit after his investiture with the dignity of the Peshwaship. The letter dated 29th, September 1740 A.D. is interesting and bespeaks the Peshwa's religious bent of mind.

".....स्वामीचे आशिर्वादाचा सर्व आमचा विचार आहे, दुसरे देवत आम्ही जाणत नाही. संसर्ग दोषाचा परिहार करावा, या विषयी आम्हा तर अवश्य स्वामीचे आज्ञे प्रमाणे वर्तणूक करू. कोणी मंत्र शास्त्री भेटतील आणि अनुष्ठान करा म्हणतील, तर ते गोष्ट न करणें. कोणाचा मंत्र न घेणें, शिवपूजन व ब्रह्मपूजन व गायत्रीजप व अनुष्ठानें करीत जाणें, म्हणून लिहीले तर आज्ञेप्रमाणें करीत

Baji Rao, generally known as Nanasaheb, in the month of August 1740 A.D. in a grand Durbar specially convened for the purpose. While conferring the dress of honour, the insignia of the dignity of Peshwa, on Balaji Baji Rao, the noble-hearted Shahu addressed the following words of wisdom and advice in a tone which at once showed that the king of the Marathas was much moved by deep feelings of joy as well as of sorrow :—

बाजीराव यांणी घोरले बाळाजीपंत यांचे मागे बहुत सेवा निष्ठेने करून मोठ मोठी काये करून दाखविलीं. शेवटीं इराणीचें (नादिरशाहाचें) पारिपत्य करून पादशाही स्थापावी म्हणोन रवाना केलें. तेथें आयुष्य मोडें जालें. इराणींनीं जी पादशाही दौलत खुद्द नेली ते अटके पार जाऊन इराणी पदशाहाचें पारिपत्य करून दौलत माघारी आणायी ऐसा मनोदय. उमेद घरली असतां ईश्वराच्या इच्छेनें असें वद्दून आलें त्यास त्यांचे पुत्र तुम्ही, त्याप्रमाणें पराक्रम करून सेवा करावयास योग्य आहां. बाजीराव यांचा हेतु राहिला व आमचा संकल्प दिवोची पादशाही कमजोर झाली ती इराणी आले त्यांजपासोन रक्षोन निम्मे हिंदुस्थान प्यावें असें लिहिलें. ते पादशाही रक्षोन हिंदुस्थान सर्व आपले करावें ऐसा वेत केला तो तुम्ही सिद्धीस न्यावा. अटकेपार घोडे नारवावे.”

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जालें. स्वयमेकरून आवरण करणें, कोणी दुराचरण करीत असतील त्यांस शासन करणें, म्हणून लिहिलें त्याप्रमाणेंच वर्तणूक करूं. बालकाचें कल्याण इच्छावें हें माता पितरांस सांगवें लागतें असें नाही. पुढें ही आम्ही लेकरें स्वामीची आहोत; आमचें कल्याण व आमची बुद्धि उत्तम कामाच्या ठयीं लागून दिवसें दिवस यज्ञाची अभिसद्धि होय, ऐसा आशिर्वाद स्वामी देतीलच, मांत संशय नाही. स्वामीकडे खर्चास रवाना करवितो ह्या ऐनबाचा अंगिकार घ्यावा; माघारा सर्वथा पाठवूं नये. तेथुनच ब्राह्मण योजून रामेश्वरास अकरा कावडी रवाना कराव्या. त्यास पैका पडेळ तो पाठवून देऊं. राज्य प्राप्ती करितां पूर्वी अज्ञाबोस लक्ष बुर्गो वाहिल्या आहेत. बाकी बाह्यत्तर लक्ष राहिल्या, त्या नासुवेच दीक्षित बाह्यत्तर. स्वामीची कृपा पाहिले ही विज्ञापना.”

Translation: "After Balaji Vishwanath, Baji Rao rendered meritorious services with all unswerving devotion. He was sent to restore the Emperor to the throne after defeating Nadir Shah. The end of his life approached. His object was to bring back the wealth from Iran after defeating the Shah. By God's will this has happened, though hope was entertained (of defeating the Shah). You are his son and worthy of achieving great successes by faithful service. Bajirao's aim remained unfulfilled, so also my resolve to obtain half of India after protecting the weak Emperor from the Irani. You should now fulfil the resolve by accomplishing the conquest of the whole of Hindusthan without dispensing with the emperor.*

The Chhatrapati's speech is remarkable, containing a brief summary of the noble views and aspirations of Bajirao endorsed by the Chhatrapati himself.† The reference in the speech to Baji Rao's resolution to bring back the enormous wealth carried away by Nadir Shah is also worthy of attention. In fact, the memorable speech serves as an index of all the discussions and arguments which Baji Rao had advanced during his confidential consultations with his gracious sovereign, the Chhatrapati. The mention made by Shahu of the services

* Shahu had made a solemn affirmation of allegiance to the emperor. Hence the emperor was to be maintained.

† The words "पादशाही रक्षोन हिंदुस्थान सर्व आपलें करावें असा वेत केला तो तुम्ही सिद्धि न्यावा" are especially noteworthy. Baji Rao desired to rule the Empire by ruling the Emperor. The Chhatrapati's personal feelings for the throne at Delhi deserve notice. Shahu's aim and Baji Rao's aspirations were crowned with success in the regimes of Nanasabab and Madhav Rao I.

rendered by Balaji Viswanath and Baji Rao is most appropriate, and Shahu, indeed, must have been exceedingly moved when he conferred the Peshwa's office on the grandson of Balaji Vishwanath whose faithful and preeminent services Shahu had warmly appreciated and approved by elevating that able Kulkarni and Sarsubhedar to the exalted position of the Peshwa. We commend, therefore, this speech for a careful perusal by our readers. We feel delighted in saying that Balaji Baji Rao fulfilled the hopes and aspirations of the gracious Chhatrapati by extending the Maratha power and thus proving himself a worthy successor of the illustrious Baji Rao, as the coming pages will show.

Nanasaheb returned to Poona in company with his uncle, Chimaji Appa and had to face a financial difficulty raised by Babuji Naik Baramatkar. Through the Peshwa's devoted Diwan Mahadaji Purandare, the difficulty was surmounted.*

Nanasaheb was surprised to find that the Emperor had appointed Azim-ulla Khan as Subhedar of Malwa, thereby totally disregarding the Peshwa's rights to the Malwa province. The Peshwa tried through Rajah Jeysing of Jaipur and the Nizam-ul-mulk to have the matter properly settled. Fifteen lacs were paid to the Peshwa as a preliminary to the final agreement which was effected between

*Baji Rao had taken loans from Babuji Naik for state purposes. The Naik aspired to get the Peshwaship through the aid of Raghuji Bhonsle, but the Chhatrapati entirely rejected the recommendation of Raghuji Bhonsle. Being thus disappointed the Naik tried to put obstacles in the Peshwa's path by demanding the amount due from the state. The Peshwa's Dewan Mahadaji Purandare stood surety for the debt and the Naik was, at last, pacified.

the Emperor and Nanasaheb. The following agreement took place between the two parties:—

(1) that the Emperor should confer a title on the Peshwa, which would increase his prestige at the Moghul court.

(2) that the Marathas would not invade any other territory of the Moghul Empire except Malwā.

(3) that the Peshwa should guarantee that no Maratha Sirdar should cross the Narbada and invade Moghul territory in Northern India;

(4) that a Maratha Sirdar of 500 horse should be in the service of the Emperor;

(5) that the Marathas should maintain a force of 4,000 horse to help the Imperial armies whenever required. If a greater force should be required, the expenses of maintaining the same should be defrayed by the Imperial Treasury;

(6) that the Marathas should not exact more revenue from the landlords beyond the Chambal than that fixed by the Marathas.

In the Karnatic the force of the Peshwa, the Pratinidhi and Raghuji Bhonsle were carrying on successful operations and making good progress. Under orders from the Chhatrapati and the Peshwa, Murar Rao Ghorpade, grandson of the famous Santaji Ghorpade, also joined the armies of the Marathas in the Karnatic. The combined Maratha army attacked Dost Ali and the Nawab of Pyneghaut and defeated and killed the Nawab, his Diwan, Meer Asad being taken prisoner by the Marathas. Dost Ali's son Safdar Ali, however made peace with the Marathas by giving them

much wealth and persuading them to conquer Trichinapally, then under the authority of Chandasaheb. Trichinapally was besieged. The Marathas took the city* on the 26th March 1741 A. D., Chandasaheb being captured and sent to Satara in custody.

In Konkan districts, Shankarji Narayan and Khandoji Mankar had done some meritorious work by defeating the Sidhis and the Portuguese. Rewadanda was taken by Khandoji Mankar from the Portuguese in 1741 A. D.† to the great exultation of the brave general Chimaji Appa who already had won a great reputation by taking Bassein (Wasai) from them in 1739 A. D. after a stubborn fight and prolonged siege.

Nanasaheb was on an expedition in the North, when Chimaji Appa breathed his last at Poona. The Peshwa's aim was to utilize the Nizam in obtaining the Sanads for the Malwa province, promised long before by the Emperor to Baji Rao, but not

*Raghuji Bhonsle made over the fort of Trichinapally to Murar Rao Ghorpade. The Peshwa Nanasaheb was given twenty thousand rupees out of the total tribute from the Arcot district.

†Eleven days after the taking of Rewadanda by the Marathas, the brave and sagacious Chimaji Appa, younger brother of the great Baji Rao died at Poona in 1741 A. D. Chimaji Appa had rendered excellent service to the Maratha Empire by his deeds of valour in Guzerath (where he is known as Chhima Rajah) Malwa and the Konkan districts. He possessed landable presence of mind, great sagacity and praiseworthy tactfulness and diplomatic skill, which he well utilized in the interests of his gracious sovereign, the Chhatrapathi Shahu who always looked upon the worthy Appasaheb with a keenly affectionate regard.

given even up to that time. The Peshwa and the Nizam* had a cordial meeting in their camps on the banks of the Nerbada. After the meeting the Peshwa returned to Poona, paying a short visit to Satara to pay his respects to the Chhatrapati. The Peshwa then devoted himself to the improvement of the internal administration of the State, winning high praise from the Chhatrapati who was greatly rejoiced to see that Baji Rao's son and successor was proving himself worthy of the discharge of the onerous duties of the Peshwa. The gracious Chhatrapati showed his warm appreciation of the zeal and energy of the Peshwa Nanasaheb by conferring on him Sanads of the newly acquired Konkan districts as well as for the amount of tribute due from the provinces north of the Nerbada, excepting Guzerath.†

The Peshwa Nanasaheb found an opportunity to interfere in the affairs of Bengal at no distant date. He obtained the Chhatrapati's order to establish his rights in the provinces north of the Narbada and with that view he started on an expedition to Malwa. After the rains he intended to march towards the province of Allahabad, but he was prevented from doing so, as Damaji Gaikwad was instigated by Raghuji Bhonsle to invade Malwa. The Peshwa had to direct his attention to Malwa,

*The Nizam's mother used to regard Baji Rao as a son. Balaji Baji Rao, the Peshwa, therefore, considered the Nizam as an uncle and there was much cordiality between them. The old Nizam treated Nanasaheb with the utmost consideration in spite of the occasional differences that arose owing to political reasons and territorial greed.

† For details about this Peshwa's policy, *vide The Marathas and the Moghuls* by the present author.

when he heard of Damaji Gaikwad's unauthorized interference with Malwa in defiance of the instructions of the Chhatrapati. Damaji Gaikwad withdrew his army when he learnt that the Peshwa was approaching with his army. Anandrao Pawar of Dhar was the first to pay his respects to the Peshwa, who received Pawar warmly and conferred on him Sanads for Dhar and the surrounding districts, whereby the Pawar became firmly attached to the Peshwa. While the Peshwa was strengthening his authority in Malwa (though the Emperor was delaying the grant of Sanads), he was duly informed of the success of the Maratha arms in Bengal and Bihar,* where Raghuji Bhonsle's

* Mir Habib invited into Bengal Bhaskarpant Kolhatkar, the Minister of Raghuji Bhonsle. Bhaskarpant accepted the invitation and invaded Behar. He surprised Allawardi Khan at Bardwan. But the usurper abandoned his baggage and refusing to surrender, stubbornly fought his way to a strong position in the Banks of the Ganges. Bhaskarpant would then have retired, but Mir Habib implored him to remain and live in the country. He convinced Bhaskarpant of the feasibility of his scheme, by borrowing from him 4000 Maratha horse and with them plundering the factory of one Jagatshet Alamchand, a wealthy banker, of no less than Rs. 300,000. Acting on Mir Habib's advice, Bhaskarpant took Hoogly, Midnapur, Rajmahal and all the Bengal districts west of the Ganges except Murshidabad.....In 1745 Bhaskarpant, at the head of twenty thousand Maratha horse demanded a sum equal to that paid by Allawardi Khan to Balaji for his assistance. Allawardi Khan, unable to meet Bhaskarpant in the field, begged to come to his tents and there discuss the amount of the indemnity and the manner of payment. Bhaskarpant, not suspecting treachery, accepted the invitation and moved his army close to Allawardi Khan's camp and waited on Allawardi Khan. Bhaskarpant was murdered.....In 1750 A. D. Allawardi Khan found it necessary, to cede to Raghuji Bhonsle the province of Orissa

General, Bhaskarpant was making his influence felt. A severe engagement took place at Burdwan between Bhaskarpant and Aliwardikhan, the Nawab of Bengal, the latter suffering a defeat and losing large supplies of arms and ammunition, which fell into Maratha hands after the victory in 1742 A. D. The Marathas pursued Aliwardikhan who reached Katwa in great distress to hear that Meer Habib* had been taken prisoner by the Marathas. While affairs in Bengal were in this condition, the Emperor's demand for the amount of tribute from Bengal was naturally incapable of being complied with, as Aliwardikhan represented to the Emperor at Delhi that the amount could not be sent on account of the Maratha invasions into the Province.* Aliwardikhan also begged the Peshwa to save the

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by way of settlement for the Chouth of Bengal and Behar. In this way the Marathas obtained in Bengal the firm footing still recalled by the ditch that once protected Calcutta; this tribute was called by Raghuji Bhosle 'Mund Katai' or head cutting in memory of Bhaskarpant's assassination." *Kincaid*.

* "Aliwardi Khan, however, was not so safe as he fancied, for Raghuji Bhosle hastened from Berar to join Bhaskarpant. Hearing this, Balaji who had received Aliwardi Khan's message and wished both to appear as an imperial general and to gratify his enmity against Raghuji Bhosle, marched with all haste to the help of Aliwardi Khan. The latter taught by experience welcomed him gladly. But Balaji leaving his ally far behind, attacked and routed unaided Raghuji Bhosle's army. The latter fled to Nagpur; but Balaji remained in Bengal, plundering the country with as much zeal as if it had been an enemy's province.....In 1744 Raghuji Bhosle and Balaji made secret compact that they should not interfere with each other in their future expeditions. Bengal was to be the preserve of Raghuji Bhosle"—, *Kincaid* Vol. II p. 283.

province from the incursions of Bhaskarpant who was carrying fire and sword through the land.* The Peshwa at once complied with the entreaties of Aliwardi Khan and marched with his forces towards his goal. Arriving at Boglipore by the route *via* Allahabad, he proceeded to Murshidabad by a short cut. Aliwardi Khan agreed to pay a large amount for the expenses of the expedition. Raghuj Bhonsle was encamped between Katwa and Burdwan and was duly informed of the alliance between the Peshwa and the Nawab. The Peshwa surprised the army of Raghuj Bhonsle putting it to rout, whereafter Raghuj† retired to Berar in hot haste. After the victory, the Peshwa returned to the province of Malwa with much wealth and more prestige. The Peshwa received at last, the long-promised Sanads from the Emperor regarding the Malwa provinces,* though the Province came under Maratha rule long ago and the Peshwa was not in need of the Sanad!

Having achieved this success in Hindusthan the Peshwa returned to Poona on the 31st July 1743 A. D. He, thereafter, went to Satara to pay

* Aliwardi Khan was also making preparations to drive Bhaskarpant from the province. As soon as the monsoon was over, he attacked Bhaskarpant's camp at Katwa and drove him from that position. Bhaskarpant entered the Midnapur districts, whence the Khan again drove him. The Khan defeated the Marathas at Balsaur and drove them from Orissa. Bhaskarpant retraced his steps to Berar and informed his master Raghuj Bhonsle of all these affairs, whereupon Raghuj undertook an expedition himself to Bengal.

† Raghuj Bhonsle was, at this time hatching schemes against the noble-hearted Chhatrapati.

his homage to the gracious Chhatrapati who was rejoiced beyond measure to hear the details of the successes achieved by Balaji Baji Rao,* whom the Chhatrapati regarded with parental kindness. During his stay at Satara, the Peshwa submitted to the Chhatrapati the lists of the accounts of the expedition explaining the items of credit and expenditure and showing a satisfactory balance. The Peshwa's presence at Satara was also of much significance in averting a danger to the Chhatrapati's prestige. The brave but short-sighted Raghuji Bhonsle† was secretly planning an invasion of Satara. With that object in view, Raghuji started from Berar, expecting the aid of Damaji Gaikwad who had thrown in his lot with Raghuji Bhonsle. The far-sighted Balaji Baji Rao who clearly saw the consequences of this fatal hostility among the rank of the Marathas endeavoured to surmount the difficulty by his tact and skill rather than by an appeal to arms. Through the noble-hearted and peace-loving Shahu Balaji tried to come to terms with Raghuji Bhonsle, to whom the Peshwa duly represented the evil effects of such internal feuds which would furnish the Moghuls with a ready

* This expedition of the Peshwa is very noteworthy. It was during this expedition that the Peshwa visited Allahabad and carried his army to the Bengal province.

† Raghuji Bhonsle had, at this very time, written a most friendly letter to the Peshwa, soliciting the Peshwa's goodwill and alliance. This was probably a diplomatic device to keep the Peshwa off his guard and fall upon him unawares. The Peshwa, however, came to know the whole plot and prepared himself to avert the trouble by persuading the Chhatrapathi to bring about a compromise whereby internecine feuds and bloodshed would be averted.

opportunity to weaken the Maratha power. Shahu's attempts to bring about friendly relations between the Peshwa and Raghuji Bhonsle were crowned with success. The following were the terms of the treaty concluded between the Peshwa and Bhonsle:

(1) That the Peshwa should have all Mokāsā rights;

(2) that the Peshwa should be in undisturbed possession of the Konkan and Malwa provinces;

(3) that the Peshwa should have the right to exact tribute from the provinces of Allahabad, Agra, Ajmere, Mangalwédhé (in the Nizam's territory) and twenty thousand rupees from the revenues of Arcot.

(4) that Raghuji Bhonsle should have the right to exact tribute from the provinces of Lucknow, Patna and Pynebengal, besides the territory extending from Berar to the Karnatak.

Great credit is due to the Chhatrapati and the Peshwa Balaji for this wise and satisfactory settlement of a dangerous matter which appeared to assume a critical aspect, with chances of fatal friction between the parties. This amicable settlement thus led to happy results. The jealousy between the Peshwa and Raghuji came to an end.* Raghuji

* The object of the contracting parties seems avowedly to have been not so much an alliance as an agreement to avoid interference with each other. The Raja's authority was in this instance convenient to both. A Sanad was given to the Peshwa, conferring on him his original mokāsā, all the Jagheers bestowed on himself or acquired by his father or his grandfather; the governments of the Konkan and Malwa;

Bhonsle was allowed to have a free hand in his aim to invade the eastern provinces. Henceforth, Bhonsle ceased his endeavours to cripple the Peshwa's power as well as to aspire after ensuring his succession to the throne at Satara after Shahu's demise. As a corollary of this treaty, it was also decided that Damaji Gaikwad should submit to the Peshwa Balaji Baji Rao accounts of the amount of the tribute collected by him in Malwa. Damaji Gaikwad must, indeed, have been crest-fallen, when he found the tables so turned upon him. The Gaikwad had to submit to the Peshwa.

The Chhatrapati was highly pleased with Balaji Baji Rao's skill, foresight and devotion to his gracious sovereign and as a mark of royal approbation of the Peshwa's eminent services, Shahu conferred on the Peshwa fresh Sanads, authorising the latter to conquer as much territory beyond the present limits of the Peshwa's jurisdiction as he could.* This was, indeed, a glorious triumph of the Peshwa's policy and his sound views about the extension of the Maratha power. In fact, this may

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and the shares of revenue or tribute from Allahabad, Agra and Ajmere; three talukas in the district of Patna, twenty-thousand rupees from the province of Arcot and a few detached villages in Raghoji's districts. On the other hand, it was settled that the revenues and contributions from Lucknow, Patna, and lower Bengal, including Bihar, should be collected by Raghuji Bhonsle. The latter was also vested with the sole authority of levying tribute from the whole territory from Berar to Kuttack. —*Grant Duff*. Vol. II, p. 13

* *Vide Grant Duff*, where the following occurs:—

"It was agreed that Damaji Gaikwad should be obliged to account to the Peshwa for the amount of the contributions

be described as the beginning of that era which culminated in the conquest of the Punjab by the Marathas a few years later, when the Deccan horses quenched their thirst in the waters of the Indus and thereby fulfilled the ambitious aims of that great Peshwa Baji Rao I., endorsed by the Chhatrapati in a great Durbar. *

We have already indicated that Raghuji Bhonsle found ample opportunity and energy, after his peace and conciliation with the Peshwa, to devote his attention to the conquest of the eastern provinces. Accordingly he sent Bhaskarpant with an army of twenty thousand to get a firm footing in Bengal. Bhaskarpant marched through Orissa, laying the country under contribution and entered Bengal. The Nawab Aliwardi Khan opened negotiations with Bhaskarpant, pretending that he

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he had levied in Malwa, but nothing was urged at this time respecting the large arrears due by Dabhada to the head of the government. It does not appear that any settlement was concluded, but Damaji seems to have remained some time in the Deccan, although his presence was much required in Guzerath. The Peshwa's southern and eastern boundaries in Hindusthan were well defined by the Narbada, Soan and the Ganges; but the Sanad delivered on this occasion authorised the Peshwa to push his conquests to northward as far as practicable."

* Shahu's promise to be loyal to the Emperor was kept by him to the last. It was of course an obstacle in the path of the Hindupad Padshahi, but the skill of the Peshwas prevailed and the Marathas ruled the Empire by ruling the Emperor. The Marathas kept the show of an Emperor to the last in order to respect the wishes of Shahu. Elsewhere we have said something on this point, which deserves attention.

was not prepared to resist the Marathas. Ultimately, the Nawab invited Bhaskarpant to a banquet and treacherously murdered his guests in cold blood.* This fatal termination of Bhaskarpant's campaign so meanly brought about by the Nawab Aliwardi Khan naturally gave great offence to Raghuji Bhonsle and other Maratha leaders. Raghuji after some time, started personally on a campaign to Bengal, as he heard that the Nawab's Pathan soldiers had mutinied. Raghuji conquered some districts and demanded thirty lacs from the Nawab who promised to pay the amount, as he was hard pressed by the Afghan trouble. As soon as the mutiny of the Afghan soldiers was suppressed, the Nawab peremptorily refused to pay the promised amount and challenged Bhonsle to a fight, in which the latter was defeated at Katwa.

Balaji Bajirao paid a visit to the province of Malwa, settling sundry disputes and strengthening his rule there by his usual conciliatory and friendly measures and paying particular attention to the establishment of cordial relations with the Rajput Princes, whom the great Baji Rao had always treated with remarkable friendliness and sincere

* This tragedy occurred at Maksudabad (Murshidabad). The Bhonsle took the Nawab to task for this heinous act. Nawab Aliwardi Khan was compelled to pay 14 lakhs as tribute by way of compensation for Bhaskarpant's murder known as "Mundkatai" in Maratha records. Bhaskar Rama, who belonged to the well known Kolhatkar family, was a brave officer and did his best in extending the power of the Marathas in Bengal, Behar and Orissa.

—*Vide Swami's Life* by Parasnis, page 179.

Raghuji Bhonsle, whose regime lasted from 1734 to 1761 was an able person.

regard.* The Peshwa returned to the Deccan after attending to various details of administration in Malwa, as it was the special care of this Peshwa to find time for the improvement of the civil administration of the country as far as was possible under the circumstances. In 1746 A.D. he sent his cousin, Sadashiv Chimnaji, generally known as Bhau Saheb, and Sakharam Bapu† with a large force to the Karnatak to adjust matters with the refractory Deshmukhs who were molesting the Peshwa's rights in the Karnatak. Bhau Saheb's march was attended with success.‡ He reached Sawanur, levying tribute on his way and adjusting disputes. An engagement ensued between him and the Nawab of Sawanur at Bahadar Bhenda, where the Nawab was defeated and the fort of Sawanur was taken by Bhau Saheb. The Nawab sued for peace which Bhau Saheb concluded, annexing all

* An anecdote about Baji Rao and Sawai Jaysing of Jeypore may be interesting in this place. Baji Rao personally demanded a large amount from that worthy Jeypore Prince, who replied that he would not give it except as "Dakshina" to the Peshwa. Baji Rao, with a remarkable presence of mind and *bon homie*, said that he, as a Brahmin, was glad to take the "Dakshina" (charity) and give "Tirth Prasad" in return! It is well known that a hereditary and intimate friendship existed between Sawai Jaysing and Baji Rao, Balaji Vishwanath being a friend of the Jeypore Prince.

† Sakharam Bapu was a clerk under the Peshwa's Dewan, Mahadajipant Purandare. He became a prominent minister afterwards and played an important part in "The Confederacy of the Twelve". His duplicity was the cause of his ruin. He was imprisoned by Mahadaji Sindhia after proof of his siding with Raghoba Dada.

‡ Sadashiv Rao Chimnaji, afterwards famous as the Bhau Saheb of Panipat.

the territory to the Maratha Empire, excepting a small portion yielding an income of about fifty thousand annually which was left to the Nawab. Bhau Saheb then returned to Satara having achieved much success in the Karnatak. The Chhatrapati received Bhau Saheb with much and warmth was greatly rejoiced to hear of the success and valour of Bhau Saheb whom the Chhatrapati appointed as deputy to the Peshwa.* This may be considered as the beginning of the career of Bhau Saheb who was like his father Chimnaji Appa, very brave and sagacious, though occasionally somewhat impetuous and self-willed.

We must now take note of the special attention which Balaji Baji Rao paid to the civil administration of the country. He gave every encouragement to the agricultural classes in those times of chaos and confusion whereby the chances of the financial prosperity of the State were improved. Like his father Baji Rao, Balaji was also interested in the extension of the Maratha territory, but Balaji did more in the interests of the Maratha Empire by his civil administration, to which Baji Rao found no opportunity to pay much attention owing to the difficulties of the times and the stress of circumstances. In this Peshwa's time, a treaty was made with the Bundelkhand Princes, which brought in an additional income of about sixteen lacs to the Peshwa with half of the profits of the diamond mines of Panna. Thus, without un-

†Bhan Saheb's father, Chimnaji Appa, was also appointed by the Chhatrapati as Deputy to Baji Rao I and on this occasion that gracious Sovereign conferred the same dignity on Chimnaji Appa's son Bhau Saheb who, afterwards figured much in the history of India.

necessary appeals to arms, the Peshwa endeavoured to raise the revenue of the Raj by his wise measures and conciliatory behaviour, which won for him the good-will of the Rayat.*

During the year 1747, the Chhatrapati Shahu had to cope with a financial situation of a trying nature owing to the increased military expenditure and the repeated expeditions requiring an enormous amount of money. The Peshwa was hard pressed by the Chhatrapati to find out a way out of the grave situation. The Peshwa's Sardars, Sindhia, Holkar, Bundele and others were not in a position to assist or rather were not as enthusiastic in endeavouring to surmount the financial difficulty as they ought to have been.† The Marathas were, at this time, bent on earning money and this spirit of greed led

* Balaji Baji Rao's wise policy in maintaining good relations with the Rajput and Bundelkhand princes was not scrupulously followed by his Sardars after the year 1747 A. D. The Peshwa went to Rajputana on his fourth expedition towards the close of 1747 and returned to Poona on 9th July 1748. The dispute about the Jaypur succession was a very troublesome affair. The excellent Rajput prince, Sawai Jaysing died in 1743 and the heirs to the Raj were Iswarsing and Madhavsing. The conduct of the Peshwa's Sardars in dealing with the sons of the late Sawai Jeysingh, the intimate friend of Balaji Vishwanath and Baji Rao, was not as satisfactory as it ought to have been, when we take the cordial relations between the Marathas and Jeysingh into proper consideration. Malhar Rao Holkar's officers pressed Iswarsingh so hard that the Rajput prince could not bear the situation. The seeds of unpleasant relations between Sindhia and Holkar were sown at this time.

† Mr. Sardesai has severely criticised the conduct of the Peshwa's Sardars in regard to this matter and has clearly shown that if these Sardars had shown a little more self-sacrifice, the financial condition of the Maratha government

to baneful results. The differences between the Peshwa's Sardars Sindhia and Holkar, and the unscrupulous attempts of their officers to extort enormous amounts from the Jeypore Princes who asserted their claims to the Raj, created a serious difficulty for the Peshwa whose aim was to suppress internecine dissensions. This unpleasant affair need not be discussed here in detail, because it is a most difficult task to ascertain exactly the fault of those, who took part in this sad transaction. Ramchandra Baba Sukthankar, the trusted servant of Baji Rao and now the Dewan of Sindhia, deprecates the proposals made by Madhosingh in these terms "माधवसिंगाचे राजकारण लुटके, त्यांत जीव नाही." (Madhosingh's cause is groundless, there is no vitality in it.) Malhar Rao Holkar wrote in highly encouraging tone to the Peshwa Nanasaheb, saying that the cause of Madhosingh was valid and in every way profitable. The sagacious Peshwa Nanasaheb wrote in reply to Ramchandra Baba to conduct the affair in such a way as not to destroy the long standing, friendly relations between Sindhia and Holkar, and thereby to create a source of bad reputation in Hindusthan, which might lead to the interference of the English in this matter. It appears that the Peshwa's advice was followed in a very lukewarm manner

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would have been easily improved. The personal hardships of these Sardars were certainly enormous, yet, a self-sacrificing spirit would have alleviated the financial strain. Moreover the greed of the Sardars obviated the chance of strengthening good relations between Sindhia and Holkar. In short, the Maratha prestige in Rajputana was, at this time, at an ebb, and led to much future trouble.

and the evil consequences, to which the Peshwa pointedly referred in his long and thoughtful letter, did follow at no distant date owing to causes of which the less said, the better.

Ultimately, the Rajput Prince Iswarsingh was so much harassed by Malhar Rao Holkar's greedy officer, Gangadharpant Chandrachood that the poor Prince took poison while in a state of mental derangement and put an end to his life and trouble!

The effect of all these discreditable transactions was that Rajput Princes, who had so great reverence for the Peshwa Balaji Vishwanath and Baji Rao I cooled down in their regard for the Marathas!*

The Peshwa Balaji Baji Rao had to face a very serious situation in the coming years. The year 1748 A. D. opened with a series of momentous changes and calamities, entailing great anxiety and giving rise to a grave situation. In this very year Ahmedshah Abdalli invaded India, took Multan and Lahore and marched towards Delhi. A severe battle took place between the Afghan Shah and the Emperor's son, Ahmed Shah, assisted by the Vazir Kamruddin at Sirhind in the March of 1748 A. D., where the Afghan Ahmedshah Abdalli

* This was a critical period and the events that followed were equally intricate. Holkar is blamed for his high handedness and greed, but it is difficult to estimate the extent of the force used by Malhar Rao. We have said something in detail on this point in our *Life of Malhar Rao Holkar* pages 53-65. Suffice it to say that seeds of estrangement were sown now and the Peshwa's Sardars did not behave with that caution which was enjoined by Baji Rao and his son Balaji Baji Rao. It is, indeed, a sad affair.

was defeated and compelled to retire to Afghanistan. The Vazir Kamruddin Khan was killed by a cannon ball. In the April of 1748 A.D., the Emperor Mohamed Shah died and his son Ahmed Shah ascended the throne at Delhi. On the 29th June of this year, the old Nizam Chinkilich Khan died at Burhanpur. The Chhatrapati's favourite Ranee, Sagunabai, became seriously ill and died in this year. Her death produced a fatal effect on the Chhatrapati's health and intellect. The health of Shahu never improved perceptibly.* The Peshwa was all along with his gracious Sovereign whose affectionate regard for Balaji Baji Rao was naturally very warm and who had appreciated his eminent services with proverbial generosity and sincerity.

The decline of the Chhatrapati's health,† was a source of the greatest mental disquietude to the

* Shahu had for some years been in a state of mental imbecility, brought on, it is said, in consequence of the death of his youngest wife. . . . "He was, for some time, afflicted with that harmless silly madness which is sometimes ludicrous even whilst it excites commiseration. It first appeared on an occasion when he had to receive a visit from two Maratha Sardars in full Darbar, by his dressing out his favourite dog in gold brocade, covered with jewels, and putting his own turban on the dog. He never resumed any covering for his head after he recovered his senses. This dog had once saved his life when hunting a tiger, and amongst other freaks, he issued Sanads conferring a Jagheer upon him, and entitling him to use a palanquin, in all which the Rajah was humoured, and the palanquin establishment literally kept up.

—*Grant Duff*, Vol. II p. 22

† Shahu had no issue, his son having died some years before, when only three years old. The question of succession became a very distressing one, as subsequent events showed.

Peshwa. It also led to several unpleasant developments which must be briefly noticed in this place. After Sagunabai's death, Shahu felt very lonely. The senior Ranee, Sakwarbai, was a hot-tempered, ambitious lady, by reason of whose intrigues, Shahu found reason for great anxiety. Sakwarbai was short-sighted and self-willed and desired to have the reins of government entirely in her hand.* As regards the point of adopting a son and successor to the throne, there arose a radical difference

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In this connection, the following observations of Sardesai based on a consideration of all the pros and cons of the case, are worthy of notice:—

“आपल्या पश्चात् हर एक नाबतीची स्थिती काय होणार, आणि ती चांगली रहाण्यासाठी आपल्या देशत काय काय उपाययोजना करिता येईल, याची चर्चा व निवडणा शाहुने सारखी चार वर्षे अगदी पुरेपूर केली. इतकी विविक्ता आज पावेतो बहुधा दुसऱ्या कोणत्याही राजकर्त्याच्या हयातीत झाली नसेल. शाहुने अमक्याची गेट घेतली नाही, किंवा अमक्याचे म्हणजे स्वाच्या कानावर गेले नाही, असे म्हणण्यास कोणासच जागा राहिली नाही. तेव्हा शाहु सर्वस्वी नानासाहेबांचे मुठीत होता, आणि पेशव्याने आपणास वाटेक तशी व्यवस्था आसन्नमरण स्थितीत शाहुचे मन धळवून त्याजकडून ठरवून घेतली, या म्हणण्यांत बिलकुल तथ्य नाही. उलट या शेवटच्या चार वर्षांत पेशव्याच्या विरोधकांचाच पंगड वाढतच गेला होता.”

*The following description of the whole situation (by the Chhatrapati) is remarkable:—

“एके दिवशी बाळाजी आदिकरून सर्व प्रधानांनी पुढे राज्याची व्यवस्था कशी करावयाची म्हणून वैय्य धरून विचारले. त्यावेळीं महाराजांनीं सांगितलें कीं ‘पुत्र व्हावयाचा असता तर तसांच पुण्यवान झाला असता, किंवा जो झाला

between the views of Shahu and Sakwar Bai, the latter alleging that 'she would adopt anyone she chose' ('मला वाटेल तो मी दत्तक घेईन').* At this very time, Shahu received a message regarding this very subject from Tarabai who was in the Satara fort in nominal custody and who rightly advanced the claims of her grandson Rajaram, pointing out the impropriety of adopting from a different fami-

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होता तो तरी कां न बाळाबा ? तेव्हां पुत्रसुख पाहण्याचे आमचे नशीबी नाही असे म्हटलें पाहिजे. दत्तक पुत्र घ्यावा तर बोरली बनीन (सकवारबाई) राहिली ती मनस्वी; चित्तांत घेईल तो मनसबा करतात. दत्तक पुत्र घेऊन तुम्हा सर्वांच्या मसळतीनें राज्य करावें असें त्यांचे दैवी नाही. संभाजी राजे आहेत त्यांनाही संतती नाही व तेही वृद्ध आहेत. ते या राज्याचे बनीच आहेत, परंतु तुम्हा सर्वांस घेऊन राज्य संभाळावें अशी त्यांच्या अंगांत कर्तव्यगारी नाही. दत्तपुत्र घेतल्याच पाहिजे तेव्हां खानवटे, गुंगी, सिंगणापूर, हिंगणी ह्या सर्व ठिकाणी बाबजी महाराजांचा वंश विस्तार आहे. तेव्हां त्यापैकी जो राजचिन्हांनी युक्त असेल त्याला दत्तक घ्यावें असे आम्हांस वाटतें.' सकवारबाईच्या मनस ती गोष्ट पटेना. तिचें असें म्हणणें कां 'मला वाटेल तो मी दत्तक घेईन'."

* It is possible that Sakwar Bai might have intended to adopt her sister's son Mudhoji, as there is a reference to this subject in the *Bhonsle's Bakhar*:—

"रघुजीचे विरेजीव मुषोजी देवरांत (बाईजवळ) होते. तेव्हां सातान्यास राजभ्रीकडे येणें झालें. राजभ्रीच्या घाकच्या राणीच्या (सगुणाबाईच्या) सुलत बहिणीचे लेकर, सबब राजभ्रीही विशेष लोभ करून होते. फत्तेसिंग भोंसले व गोविंदराव चिटणीस यांकडेस बहिबाट, त्याबद्दल गोविंदराव चिटणीसांचे निधमानें विचार ठरला, व गांवांतही झालें कीं राजभ्री सालीचे केकास दत्तक घेतात. ताराबाई व आईसाहेबांनीं ऐकून 'अस्सल वंश असतां बाहेरचा कां घ्यावा ?' बसा निषेध केला. मग राजभ्रीनीं दत्तक घेणें राहवले."

ly.* Shahu sent Yeshwantrao Potnis and Govindrao Potnis to make enquiries and ascertain the truth from Bawdekar. On being informed that Tarabai's words were full of truth, Shahu approved of her sound suggestion and ordered the ministers to place Tarabai's grandson Rajaram on the throne after his demise and to carry on the state of affairs with a unity of purpose.† Sakwar Bai highly resented this decision and determined to adopt some other boy. This self-willed conduct brought about strained relations between her and the Peshwa who desired to follow the Chhatrapati's advice and views.

*Tarabai's message was couched in the following terms:—

“बाहेरचा मुलगा पाहाण्याची विशेष जल्दी दिसत नाही. माझे माझा मुलगा शिवाजी बारम्बार त्या देवी त्याची स्त्री भवानीबाई गरोदर होती. तिच्या पुढे मुलगा झाला. त्याला मी गुप्तपणे प्रथमतः बाजीराव मगवंतराव बाबडेकर यांचे घरी ठेविला होता. नंतर तो पांच वर्षांचा झाल्यावर त्याला मी पानगांवी त्याची मावशी दय्याबाई निवाळकर ह्या घरी पाठवून दिले, व तेव्हापासून तो तिच्याच घरी आहे. तेव्हा अस्सल वंशज जिवंत असता बाहेरचा मुलगा दत्तक घेणे रास्त होणार नाही.” —*Kavyatihar Sangraha*

“The pregnancy of Bhowanee Bye, the wife of the second Shivaji, was strongly suspected by Rajis Bye, the younger wife of Rajaram, at the time of Shivaji's death, and it required all the care and circumspection of Tara Bye to preserve the infant from destruction.” —*Grant Duff*

† अस्सल वंश असता परका दत्तक घेऊन निमाव लागणार नाही. बरोडे माजतील. तेव्हा आमचे त्या मुलास आपून गादीवर बसवामे व सर्वांनी एक निवाराने राहून हे राज्य संभाळामे.

“Such was the noble advice and view of the sagacious Chhatrapati, but it fell on the deaf ears of Sakwar Bai, whose plots and machinations, supported by some members of Shahu's Court were zealously in progress to put down Tarabai and

Undaunted by the plots of Sakwar Bai and her supporters,* Balaji Baji Rao set to carry out the wishes of his gracious master. He sent a trust-

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her grandson. Though Balaji Baji Rao carried out the instructions of the Chhatrapati by placing Ram Raja on the throne and thus fulfilling her desire, yet through a peculiar freak of fortune bitter feelings were cherished for a long time by Tarabai against this Peshwa. The amiable and diplomatic disposition of Nana Sahib seems, however, to have been instrumental in effecting an understanding between them ultimately.—*Vide Rajwade's Khunt XI No. 113, and Sardesai Vol. II, p. 289.*

“ शेवटीं शेवटीं ताराबाईंनी व पेशव्यांनी धरीच गोडी झालेली दिसते. ता. २३ जून सन १७५८ चें ताराबाईंचें पेशव्यास आज्ञापत्र येणेप्रमाणें आहे. ‘ विरजीव साहू बाबा यांची कैलासवास जाहत्या नंतर, साहेबांत व दुम्यांत कित्याकांनी नानाप्रकारें विकल्प घाळून राज्यांत बसवडे केले, ते विशीं सदाशिव बीक्षित ठकार यांणी अस साहस करून साहेबांचे व दुमचें एक व्हा करून बंदोबस्त केला, त्यावरून राज्योपयोगी मनुष्य ऐसें जाणून इनाम यांब वंचरा सहस्र रुपयांचें दारें व यांचे पुत्र पौत्रादि वंश परंपरेन चालवार्जे. [खं ११-जे. ११३] —*Vide Sardesai vol. II, p. 289*

* On this point Grant Duff's observations are as follows:

“.....The eldest surviving wife of Shao, Suckwar Bye Sirkay, true to the inherent violence and ambition of her family, on becoming acquainted with this declaration on the part of Tara Bye, which deprived her of all chance of the power she expected, by seeing a minor placed on the throne under her own care, immediately opened a communication with Sumbhajee, inciting him to oppose the pretensions of the alleged grandson of Tara Bye, whom she declared an imposter. She promised to aid Sumbhajee with her utmost means; she engaged Yamajee Shewdeo in her cause, and Jag Jeewan, the younger brother of the late Pratinidhi Shreepnt Rao, also promised her all the support in his power. Dammajee Gaekwad gave his assent to the proposal.....” —*Grant Duff*

ed clerk in the service of Govindrao Chitnis to Pan-gaon, escorted by five hundred horses to bring Rajaram to Satara. This act of the Peshwa added fuel to the fire of Sakwar Bai's wrath. She resolved to leave no stone unturned in counteracting the decision of the Chhatrapati and the Peshwa. She even invited the aid of the old Sambhaji of Kholhapur! She made strict arrangements that the Peshwa and his supporters should not be able to see the dying Chhatrapati, who was grieved to find that things should have come to this pass.* Balaji Baji Rao had, apart from any plans of ambition, a deeprooted affection for the gracious Chhatrapati who also heartily reciprocated those feelings of the Peshwa. At last, the Chhatrapati called the Peshwa to his presence and with the consent of Govindrao Chitnis, Shahu gave Balaji Baji Rao a memorandum in his own handwriting containing instructions for the guidance of State affairs after his demise, taking a written promise from the Peshwa that the latter would duly respect the rights of all

*Shahu was deadly against the amalgamation of the State of Satara and Kolhapore.

कोल्हापूरचें राज्य एक करूं नये. माझे पाठीमागे राजारामास दत्तक घेऊन राज्य चालवावें. तसेंच पूर्वीप्रमाणे सर्वांचें आहे तसेंच चालवून राज्याचें संरक्षण करावें.

—*Vide Appendix*

This deed also directed that the Kolhapore State should always be considered an independent sovereignty; that the Jagheers, as now existing, were to be confirmed to the holders, leaving power with the Peshwa to conclude such arrangements with the Jagheerdars as might be beneficial for extending Hindu power, for protecting the Temples of the Gods, the cultivators of the fields and whatsoever was sacred or useful.

—*Grant Duff*

parties as they had been upto that time. The written promise was endorsed by an oath from Balaji Baji Rao, whereafter Shahu delivered the memorandum into the Peshwa's hands.

Before proceeding to describe the further developments of this important turning of the political wheel, we wish to give some unpleasant details about Sakwar Bai's machinations. She had even gone to the length of instigating a plot to assassinate the Peshwa Balaji Baji Rao and Govindrao Chitnis, both of whom were sincerely devoted to Shahu. Captain Grant Duff on this point observes as follows :—

"Sakwarbai, in order to conceal her plot, always gave out that in the event of Shahu's death she would burn with the corpse; this declaration proved her ruin, for the wily Brahmin affected to believe it; and took care to circulate the report, until it became so general that its non-fulfilment would, in the eyes of the whole country, have become a reflection on the honour of the family."

—*Grant Duff*, Vol. II, Page 24

Grant Duff is obviously mistaken in his view. His statements are, moreover, inconsistent with the real situation. Sakwarbai's power was not

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Balaji had, on his appointment as Peshwa, pledged himself to support the claim of Sambhaji of Kolhapore. This policy, which would have united under one crown the two Bhosle Kingdoms, would certainly have been best for the Maratha people. But in spite of their apparent reconciliation Shahu hated Sambhaji and never forgave him his alliance with the Nizam or Udaji Chawan's attempt to assassinate him.

—*Kincaid*, Vol. II, p. 296

such as to counter-act that of the Peshwa and so the Peshwa had no reason to compel or persuade her to become Suttee. In fact Sakwarbai had committed herself, as Grant Duff admits, to become a Suttee by her own words. Grant Duff's confused assertion, therefore, falls to the ground and requires no further refutation.

The following is the text of the famous memorandum,* in the handwriting of the Chhatrapati Shahu, which deserves careful attention:—

“राजमान्य राजश्री प्रधान पंडित यांस आह्वा; तुम्ही कौज धरने आह्वा केडी. त्याच्या दैवी नाही. महाराजांस हुकूमनें झाले. बरे होत नाही. राज्यभार चालला पाहिजे. तरी पुढें वंश बसवण. कोळपुरचे न करन. चिटणीसास सर्व सांगितले, तसें करन, वंश होईल त्याच्या आज्ञेत चालनें, राजमंडल चालवनें, चिटणीस स्वामीचे इसवासु त्याच्या विचारानें राज्यवंश होईल तो तु करवार नाही. सुटन असा.”

—R. B. Sane's *Kavyetihas Sangraha*

*The written promise which the Peshwa Nanasaheb gave to the Chhatrapati was couched in the following terms:—

“पूर्वापासून ज्यांचे जे हक्क चालत आले आहेत ते जसेच्या तसे मी चालवीन.”

Translation: I will implicitly continue the rights and privileges of those persons as they had been enjoyed by them in the past. The Chhatrapati gave the memorandum (यादी) thereafter to the Peshwa, investing him with the full powers of the State.

“Although Suckwar Bye seldom quitted the Raja, and kept him constantly surrounded by persons in her interest, Balaji found means to obtain a private interview, at which he induced the Raja to give him a deed, empowering the Peshwa to manage the whole Government of the Maratha empire on condition of his perpetuating the Raja's name and keeping up the dignity of the house of Shivaji, through the grandson of Tarabai, and his descendants.”

—Grant Duff, Vol. II, pp. 24-25

When all hopes of the Chhatrapati's recovery were given up, Sakwar Bai removed him to the palace at Satara, keeping him surrounded constantly by persons belonging to her party. She also made adequate arrangements to have a watch kept on the visits paid by the Peshwa and his friends to the Chhatrapati.* Sakwar Bai found an opportunity to speak to the Chhatrapati about her plans, when the sagacious sovereign asked her the names of the persons in her party capable of carrying out the said plans and also enquired whether they had a sufficient force for that purpose. She had collected an army through the Pratinidhi numbering about 8,000 soldiers. When all these circumstances were brought to the notice of the Chhatrapati on his death-bed, he thought that some trouble was sure to follow his demise and consequently he advised the Peshwa to be on his guard supported by a sufficient force ready at his command. The Chhatrapati also advised the Peshwa to safeguard his life and position in every possible way.† This is another instance of the calm

* While Sakwarbai's preparations were zealously going on, energetically backed by the Pratinidhi, Yamaji Shivdeo, and others, the Peshwa was also on his guard and doing his best to follow the instructions given by his dying Sovereign. The Peshwa issued orders to Gopal Rao Yadav, Baji Rao Yadav, Chinto Waman Sagaonkar, Moro Shivdev Thitte, Rustom Rao Wanknis and others to attend to the details relating to the Kolhapur activities, while Anandrao Jadhav Havaladar and Jyotiba Ananta Subhedar were to look after the Satara fort, where Tarabai was residing and brooding over her deep-laid schemes.

† Sakwarbai considered Govindrao Chitnis and the Peshwa Balaji as opponents in the path of her ambition. She ordered Yamaji Shivdev to assassinate the Peshwa. But the plot failed ultimately.

wisdom and foresight of the sagacious and kind-hearted Chhatrapati and his deep sympathy and solicitude for the Peshwa.

Shahu invited all his ministers and Sardars to his bedside when he thought that his end was nearing, and exhorted them to carry on the state affairs by placing Ram Raja on the throne and working with unity amongst themselves for this kingdom of "Dev Brahmins"* (देव ब्राह्मण). Shortly after this the noble-minded sovereign of the Marathas breathed his last in the Rangmahal at Satara on the 15th of December 1749 A. D., his last moments being devoted entirely to prayers, hearing sacred books and distributing charities.†

The news of the death of the great Chhatrapati filled every one's mind with grief. The Peshwa Balaji Baji Rao, who, like his master the Chhatrapati, possessed an exceedingly loving and genial disposition, felt it to the heart, for it was Chhatrapati Shahu, who had placed Balaji Vishwanath,

* Shahu had some wit and his reply to a letter received about this time from Rajah Jeysingh of Jaipur, shows that he retained it to the last. "The Rajah asks what Shahu had performed for the Hindu faith and what charities he had bestowed; 'I have,' replied Shahu, 'conquered from the Musalmans the whole country from Rameshwar to Delhi, and I have given it to the Brahmins.'

—*Grant Duff*, Vol. II, p. 22

† "His earthly affairs settled, Shahu dismissed his ministers and with a mind composed waited calmly for death. He sprinkled holy ashes over his body and took his rosary between his fingers. He murmured slowly the names of Rama, Shiva, Har Har, several times and met his end as became the nephew of Rajaram and the grandson of Shivaji.

—*Kincaid*, Vol. II, p. 301

Baji Rao and Balaji Baji Rao upon the Peshwa's Mansad. It is difficult, if not impossible, to imagine or paint in words the genuine affection which Shahu felt for the Peshwas, and which the latter reciprocated heartily and faithfully. Although Balaji Baji Rao's grief was extremely poignant and overwhelming, he felt it his first duty to arrange everything according to the wishes and instructions left by his master the late Chhatrapathi. He ordered his army to guard the city in order to obviate the chance of any disturbance due to the attempts of the party interested in encouraging Sakwar Bai's schemes.* Balaji then sent for the father of Sakwar Bai and asked him to let the Peshwa know about

* "The Rajah had scarcely ceased to breathe when a body of horse galloped into the town of Satara, surrounded and seized the Pratinidhi and his Mutalik Yamaji Shivdeo; placed them in irons on the instant, and sent them off strongly escorted, to distant hill-forts. Every avenue about the town was occupied by troops, and a garrison of the Peshwa's was placed in the fort, while a party was detached to re-inforce the escort of Ram Rajah who had not arrived when Shahu died."

—*Grant Duff*, Vol. II, p. 25

From Grant Duff's very words, it will be seen that Balaji was doing everything as ordered by his master and following his instructions duly.

The extent of Sakwarbai's indefatigable exertions can be gauged from the circumstance that she did not desist from troubling the Chhatrapati, even in that sinking condition of his health, with her plans when the sagacious sovereign on his death-bed asked her :

“हैं तुमचें राजकरण पार पाइन नेणारी निश्चासू माणसें तुमच्यापारी कोण आहेत ?...तुमचे जवळ फौज कोठें आहे ?”

Sakwarbai mentioned the names of the Pratinidhi and Yamaji. Shahu could well see that these men were not capable of grappling with the grave situation.

the plans of his daughter. Sakwarbai's* position was, certainly, very difficult and perplexing. On one side lay the duty of high class Hindu ladies; on the other her ambition and her conduct as opposed to the views of the Chhatrapati and the Peshwa. What should be done under these trying and critical circumstances was, indeed, very difficult to be decided. The fear of popular odium was also a great factor to be taken into view in the decision of the matter. We have no desire to do any wrong to the memory of departed personages.

† Balaji's words with respect to this matter were as follows :—

“बाई साहेबांची मर्जी कशी आहे ? महाराजांसारखे रत्न आज हरपले. पुढे राज्यकारभार चालविणे या संघर्षाने मुळगा दस्तक घेऊन राज्यकारभार चालवावा, अशी महाराजांची आग्रहास आह्वा घालीच आहे. आतां बाईसाहेब याच आमच्या महाराज असें आम्ही समजतो. तेव्हा आह्मां सर्वांस घेऊन राज्यकारभार चालविण्याची मर्जी आहे किंवा सह्यमन करण्याचा विचार आहे याची नीट चवकशी करावी, म्हणजे त्याप्रमाणे व्यवस्था करण्यास ठीक पडेल.

Captain Grant Duff has put an insidious interpretation on the Peshwa's words. He sees nothing but the “art” of “a wily Brahman” in them; nothing but the “calm villainy of a Brahmin Court” in securing power. We leave the matter to the judgment of our readers, observing only that the difficulty of the Peshwa's situation at that critical moment must be taken into consideration along with the circumstance that Sakwarbai's plans were diametrically opposed to the late Chhatrapati's views and that the Peshwa had taken a solemn oath in the presence of his dying sovereign to obey his dying wishes and instructions. We sincerely trust that prejudices should not be allowed in such a subject. That Captain Grant Duff is wrong in passing such strictures on the Peshwa's conduct is now clear as day-light. Kincaid and Paramis refute Grant Duff's view.

But seeing the whole question in an impartial light we think that the course followed by Sakwar Bai was the one most suited to the peculiarly sad situation, in which destiny had placed her,* having full regard to the religious notions and ideals of high class Hindu ladies of those times† when a Suttee was honoured duly by all. Sakwarbai's father Kavarji Shirke informed Balaji of her resolution to immolate herself with the Chhatrapati's corpse. Her message to the Peshwa was couched in the following terms:—"आमी मोष्ट ती बरीच द्याली. महाराज गेले. आम्हांच राहावयाचे नाही. तुम्ही सर्व महाराजांची आज्ञा जाहाली असेल तसें करून राज्य करावे."

* Sakawar Bai had pronounced her views and insertions in such a decided and definite way that her life, after the Chhatrapati's death, would have been a sad prolongation of those plans which the late Chhatrapati had directly and openly denounced, and which the Peshwa, in obedience to his sovereign's definite orders, had taken a solemn oath to counter-act. The Peshwa was morally and constitutionally bound to obey his gracious sovereign's instructions. Under the circumstances, it would have been impossible for Sakawar Bai to live a peaceful life. In fact, Sakawar Bai had created such a peculiarly critical situation for herself by her open plans, directly opposed to the late Chhatrapati's views, that she could expect nothing but disappointment for her during her existence.

† In this connection, Mr. Sardesai has made excellent observations, based on Pandit Khare Shastri's remarks, showing the untenable nature of Grant Duff's wrong views and his equally groundless assertions against the Peshwa Nanasahab:

"सकवार बाईला पेशव्यानें बळजबरीनें छती चालविलें, जसें नीच कृत्य कृत्या पेक्षां दिव्य उपकरणें कांशी दिलें असतें तर तें पुष्करपांख घोडें

The body of the Chhatrapati was placed in a palanquin with all the Royal Insignia and Sakwar Bai was also similarly seated in a palanquin and carried to Mahuli, where the rivers Krishna and Vena meet, and all the funeral ceremonies were performed according to the Shastras, a large amount being spent in charities. Maloji Bhonsle of Mungi performed all the funeral rites with due ritual*

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तरी असतें," अद्या आशयाचा अमिप्राय सकवार बाईच्या सती जाण्यासंबंधानें प्रॅट डफनें नानासाहेब पेशव्यावर दिला असून अद्यापिही कित्येक लोक या मताचे आहेत. या प्रकरणा संबंधानें सरा प्रकार काय झाला, त्याचें बरोबर आकलन व्हावें या साठीच उपलब्ध हकीकत ती बर जरा विस्तारानें दिली आहे. शिवाय ज्या दृष्टीनें या प्रकरणाचा निर्णय ठरवावयाचा ती दृष्टी तत्कालीन वस्तुस्थिति पहाणारी असून दुराग्रहदूषित नसावी. प्रॅट डफनें संलग्न करणांत जाणा अडविलें खबरच नाही. पाश्चात्यांस जितका सतीचा क्रिडस वाटतो, तितका तो हिंदूस वाटणें शक्य नाही. बाई सती गेल्यानें नानासाहेबाचें पुढील काम सितकें हलकें झालें. एवढाचरून केवळ स्वार्थ बुद्धीनें त्यानें तिला चिडवून सती घालविलें असें मात्र नाही.

—*Vide Sardesai Vol. II, p. 160*

Mr. Kincaid, historian of the Maratha People, refutes Grant Duff's aspersions against the Peshwa Nanasaheb.

—*Vide Vol. II, p. 302*

*"Previously to Shahu's demise, orders in his name had been sent to Yeshwantrao Dabhade and Raghuji Bhonsle, requiring their presence at Satara. The latter had become totally imbecile from habits of debauchery, and, as probably had been foreseen, neither Dabhade nor Damaji Gaikwad, the commander of his army, attended. Most of the other Jahagirdars were present, but if any were disposed to resist the Peshwa's authority, they remained passive, until they should see what part Raghuji Bhonsle would assume. But Raghuji's ambition was now controlled by the caution of age,

in the presence of all the ministers, Sirdars, and officers of the Maratha Empire.*

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and the admonition of experience His disposition was pacific towards the Peshwa, but he made some demur in acknowledging Ram Rajah. He required, in testimony of his being Bhonsle, and the grandson of Raja Ram, that Tara Bai should first eat with him in presence of the caste, deposing on the food they ate together, that Ram Raja was her grandson. On this being complied with in the most solemn manner Raghujii declared himself satisfied, and after a long conference with the Peshwa he gave his assent to the propriety of the plans submitted for his consideration."

—Grant Duff's History

Is it not a pity that Grant Duff should have doubts about this Peshwa even after recording so much about him ?

*The Peshwa's precautions, after Shahu's death, were most praiseworthy and quite in accordance with the wishes and the instructions of the late Sovereign. Kincaid gives the following account of the Peshwa Balaji Baji Rao's prompt measures for securing the peace and success of the administration of the Kingdom and the city of Satara. "The Peshwa who had assembled round or near Satara an army of thirty five thousand men, had for some weeks past halted between several plans. He now acted with the promptitude of Frederick. At dawn a body of cavalry galloped into Satara town, seized Jagjiwan Pratinidhi and Yamaji Shivdev and sent them in irons to distant forts. Every street swarmed with the Peshwa's troops and a strong detachment made themselves masters of Satara fort. That evening Balaji called a meeting of the Council with the exception of the Pratinidhi and produced before them the papers given him by the late king. These documents empowered him, as he justly said, to administer the Maratha Kingdom on behalf of Ram Raja and his descendants. In view of these papers, Balaji declared and the Council agreed that Rama Raja was the only possible successor to the late King."

—Kincaid's History, Vol. II, p. 301

CHAPTER IX

So passed away the noble-minded, sagacious, pious and ease-loving Chhatrapati, Shahu Maharaj. He was 28 years of age when he was crowned king of Maharashtra in 1708 A.D. and during his long and eventful career extending over more than forty years, Maharashtra rose to greatness and prospered owing to his tactful and wise selection of men and measures. Conciliation was the keynote of his policy.* His piety and generosity were unbounded. Even to those who tried hard to harm him, he was forgiving to a degree and sincerely liberal. Having been brought up under the care of the luxurious Moghul Court, he, certainly, did not possess the hardihood of the great Shivaji or Baji Rao I, but in spite of this, he was brave and during the earlier years of his reign, he was not unwilling to lead an expedition against the foes of the Maratha Empire.

*The following extract from the *Bakhār* is very interesting.

"साताच्यास तस्त करून राहिले तेव्हांपासून राज्यकारभार सेवकलोकांपासून, मोठ्या मसळती व बुद्ध प्रसंग मोठ्या कौशा पाठवून केले. मनसब्यांत बहुतच चतुर, सर्व राज्य भोंगळाईत गेले होते ते मसळतीनें सोडविले. सर्व लोक जाहोत बागवून नवीन मोठी माणसें निर्माण केलीं, वाढविलीं. जुनीं माणसें अजुकूल झालीं त्यांचें चालविलें. बाह्याच्या पोख माणसांच्या मसळतीनें चालावें. शिवासू सेवक लोकांचे हातीं कामें घ्यावी. लघु मनुष्य, कैफी व्यसनी शास्त्रज्ञ, यांस समीप न ठेवितां मुत्सद्दी लोकांचे हातून कारभार चालविले. मराठे लोकांस शिपाईगिरीचे कामांत ठेविले. उत्तर देश सोडवून पोर्तुगेझाराजांचा उद्देश सिद्धिस नेला. आचणमाळांत ब्राम्हणांची वेद शास्त्रांत परिक्षा करून प्रथम शमाण्याचें मार्फत तळेंभांव येथें व पुढें पुढें येथें चार पांच लक्ष वर्ग करावा, असें ठरविले....बघी काशी तसें सातारा पुणें विद्यापीठच झाले....शाहू मोठे मनमिळक होता...."

He had not the least tinge of a vindictive spirit.* His greatest merit lay in his readiness to rise to the occasion and in his delegation of power to proper persons as well as his wisdom in seeking advice for selecting a right man for the right post. Though he was ease-loving and fond of pleasures, he had the foresight to guard against the coming dangers to the State. He had a deep-rooted reverence for the Hindu religion.† He had a sincere respect for the Moghul throne at Delhi,

* Shahu's good nature and benevolent tendencies are proverbial. In fact, they were the outcome of an extremely pious and God-fearing temperament, formed by constant contact with saints. Shahu's Gurus (spiritual guides) were Brahmendra Swami of Dhavadshi and Narayan Dixir, who greatly influenced the Chhatrapati's disposition, which was naturally of a religious bent and amiable. In the Appendix, some letters written by Shahu to Brahmendra Swami are given. The Samsthan of Dhavadshi received strong support from the Chhatrapati who conferred some villages for the upkeep of the Temples and other charitable institutions, started by the revered Swami. In the *Life of this Swami* written by Rao Bahadur Parasnis, the reader will find many interesting details about that saint's disinterested activity and noble endeavours to attend to the call of suffering humanity. Shahu was widely known as "Bhola Shankar".

† Mr. Kincaid, the historian of the Marathas says as follows about Shahu :—

Greatness cannot be claimed for Shahu. Nevertheless we cannot withhold our admiration, when we consider the difference between the Maratha power as he found it and as he left it. When he ascended the throne, his kingdom was a mere strip of land round the Satara fort. When he left it, it completely overshadowed the Moghul Empire. If he had no great talents, he possessed sound common sense. He had a kindly nature and a placable temper. He had the wisdom to employ great men and the greater wisdom to give them his entire support. He was a keen huntsman, and preferred the

where he was brought up by Aurangzeb's daughter, called in the Maratha records as "Begum Sahib". Under the circumstances, it was a Herculean task to prevail upon him to sanction an attack upon the Moghul throne.* But for the unswerving resolution of Baji Rao I to carry the Maratha flag beyond the Nerbada into the heart of Hindusthan it would have been difficult to persuade the Chhatrapati to sanction the expeditions which were sent from Satara to subjugate the Moghul

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pleasures of the chase to the toils of office. But the indolence, which marred his reputation as a ruler, increased the love of his subjects for their kindly Prince. Many stories are still told of his lavish generosity; and by his court he used often to be compared with Karna, the open-handed hero of the Mahabharata."—*History of the Maratha People* by Kincaid and Paransis. Vol. II, p. 304.

* The only fault we have to find with the Chhatrapati Shahu is his unwillingness to sanction Baji Rao's admirable plan about dispensing with the Titular Emperor and his authority and asserting independence by destroying the Moghul throne at Delhi. All the Princes of Rajputana had already resolved to sever their allegiance to the Moghul Emperor. The great Sawai Jaysingh of Jaipur, the intimate friend and admirer of Baji Rao, was the central figure in the grand Rajput combination, which zealously looked to the Peshwa for the achievement of their aim of establishing the "Hindupad-Padshahi." But Shahu would not agree to the plan and Baji Rao's firm resolve was to obey his Sovereign—Baji Rao and Sawai Jaysing were even thinking of placing the Maharana of Udaipur on the imperial throne at Delhi, when Shahu was opposed to the proposal of sitting on it. But the fulfilment of this hope was indefinitely deferred by the premature death of Baji Rao and Sawai Jaysingji. When the Nizam Asaf Jah became independent, Shahu had no reason whatsoever to oppose Baji Rao's resolve to dispense with the Moghul throne at Delhi and found the Hindupad Padshahi.

provinces in Upper India.* Shahu deserves much credit for having the judgment and foresight to approve of Baji Rao's great schemes and glorious campaigns against the Moghuls, in spite of all opposition from his courtiers and in spite of his regard for the Moghul throne.

Balaji Baji Rao regarded the Chhatrapati Shahu with the affectionate regard due to a father in the true spirit of a Hindu of the old type; and the Chhatrapati heartily reciprocated the

* In order to fully understand Shahu's mentality, the following circumstances should be borne in mind, as their effect on the career of Shahu was almost unshakable. Kincaid describes the affair in a masterly way :—

"The sworn faith of Itikad Khan would hardly have shielded Yesubai and her son had she not found a friend in the emperor's second daughter Zinatunnissa. Between the death of Shah Jehan and her own death in September 1681, Aurangzib's sister, Jahanara, had been the first lady at Court. She controlled the emperor's seraglio and bore the title of Begum Sahib or the Princess Royal. On her demise the emperor appointed to the vacant post his second daughter Zinatunnissa, who had never married. Zinatunnissa greeted Yesubai as a sister and adopted Prince Shivaji as her son. The Maratha chroniclers love to repeat a strange explanation of her kindly conduct. In 1666, she had, as a girl, seen Shivaji's gallant bearing in the imperial hall at Agra and from that time on had conceived a regard for the Maratha leader. Afterwards when Sambhaji asked for her hand as the price of his apostacy, she treated the request as a genuine offer of marriage and thereafter deemed her faith plighted to the dead King. In memory of him she treated Yesubai as her co-wife and Shivaji as her own child."

—*Kincaid*, Vol. II, page 70

† The Hindus of the old type were guided by the spirit of the following Sloka (verse):—

अन्यादा भयश्रता कन्यादाता तथैव ।

अनिता शोपनेता च पन्थेये पितरः स्मृताः ॥

cordial feelings so sincerely entertained by the Peshwa as was proved by many a test* and he was altogether beyond suspicion of any artificial, formal, or diplomatic conduct.

Mr. Rajwade has condemned what he thinks to be the baneful disregard of the Peshwas towards the Maratha fleet, which Shivaji's wisdom and foresight had brought into existence. The maritime strength of the Marathas, he asserts, declined during the days of the Peshwas and this was, indeed, a point of weakness to the Maratha Empire. We give below the detailed observations of Mr. Rajwade on this point in his own words with a free translation in English:—

“पेशव्यांनी सर्वांत मोठे चूक म्हणजे जे आरमार शिवाजीने मोठ्या दुरु दृष्टीने स्थापन करून जोरांत वापरून ठेविले, ते त्यांनी बुडविले. कोंकणातले कोळी व मंडारी यां सारखे उत्कृष्ट खेळशी पृष्ठीवर कवितेच सांपडतील. त्यांना पाश्चात्यांचे नौकायन शिकविले असते तर राज्यास अतीशय बळकटी आली असती. अनावरी काळापासून नौकानवजात हिंदुस्थानने नांव प्रमुख

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Translation :—“The giver of food, the deliverer from a calamity, the father-in-law, the real father, the preceptor—these five are called fathers.”

It is rather difficult for Young India to imagine the frame of mind with which Balaji regarded his master the Chhatrapati Shahu who raised Balaji Vishwanath and Haji Rao to Peshwaship. History presents very rare instances of a Sovereign's continued confidence in successive scions of the same family, which they richly deserved.

*Shahu had tested Balaji Bajirao's loyalty and attachment to his person and throne on many an occasion. Balaji stood the tests and Shahu was fully convinced that his Raj would be safe in the Peshwa's hands. Shahu therefore gave the whole Raj to the Peshwa for administration according to his orders and instructions. It is wrong to say that the Peshwa “usurped” the Raj. On this point we have given the views of Mr. Kincaid and other historians later on in this work.

असून वाच विवेच्या जेरावर हिंदूंनी आर्यसुधारणा पृथ्वीवर पसरली. तिचा शेवटचा अवशेष शिवाजीने मोठ्या परिश्रमाने दक्षिण किनाऱ्यावर राखिल्ल. अशा प्रकारचे मराठी आरमार बाळाजी रावाने इंग्रजांची मदत घेऊन बुडविले. त्याने तुळजा आंग्रे नाहीसा केला, आपले काम करव्यास शत्रूंची मदत घेऊं नये हें मोठें तत्व बाळाजीने लक्षांत ठेविलें नाहीं. सत्ताबन सालच्या वर्षांत हिंदुस्थानांत इंग्रजांची बांदल उडाली असतों फ्रान्सचा राजा दुसरा नेपोलियन यानें इंग्रज प्रधान मंडलांस असें सुचविलें कीं मी एक आरमार तयार करून तुमच्या मदतीस पाठवितों. परंतु इंग्रजांनीं फ्रान्सची मदत स्वीकारली नाहीं. त्यांतील मर्म ध्यानांत ठेवण्याजोगें आहे. एवढा चाणाक्ष नानासाहेब पेशवा पण तो असा चकछ. इल्ली हिंदुस्थानांत थोडीशी चकमळ सुरू झाल्यावरुन कितीतरी इंग्रज व इतर प्रवासी येथें येऊन आपापल्या परीं प्रत्यक्ष माहिती आंतून व बाहेरून मिळवितात. पूर्वेतिहास, काणदपत्र, फोटो इत्यादी मिळवून व स्वानुभव घेऊन त्या गोष्टी ते तिकडे जाऊन प्रसिद्ध करितात. म्हणजे राज्यांत यत्किंचित् कमीजास्त झाले कीं लगेच हजारों उपायांनीं त्याचा छडा लावणे हा पाश्चात्यांचा स्वभावजन्य मोठा गुण आहे, तो आमच्या मध्ये पूर्वी कधीं नव्हता व अद्यावद्ही फार दिसत नाहीं. परदेशांत आपल्या एजेंटी किंवा वकीलाती ठेवल्या नाहींत. मनुष्या एका निर्बंधानें एवढा मोठा परिणाम झाला. पेशव्यांना सर्वस्वी नादान ठरविणें म्हणजे अन्याय होईल परंतु त्यांनीं कित्येक अक्षम्य चुका केल्या हें मात्र कबूल केले पाहिजे.”

—pages 465-466

Free Translation :—“The greatest mistake of the Peshwas lay in the destruction of the fleet which was brought into existence by Shivaji with great foresight. It is difficult to find excellent mariners like the Kolis and the Bhandaris of the Konkan and if they would have been taught the science of navigation of the Europeans, the Maratha power would have received an incalculable accession of strength. From times immemorial the Hindus are famous for their proficiency in the science of navigation, whereby they spread the

Aryan civilisation in the whole world. Shivaji maintained its last remnant on the Western Coast with great skill and exertions. Balaji destroyed this Maratha Navy with the help of the English. He destroyed Tulaji Angre. Balaji did not remember the doctrine that it was unwise to seek the enemy's aid for the accomplishment of a purpose. At the time of the Indian Rebellion of 1857, the French King Napoleon II offered to supply a fleet to the British Ministry for helping the tottering power of the English in India, but the English declined to accept the French King's offer. The moral of this incident deserves to be borne in mind. A vigilant Peshwa like Nanasahab committed a blunder in this way. The least agitation in India witnesses the rush of European visitors to study the problem by acquiring firsthand information publicly or secretly. They publish the same in order to bring about adequate changes in the political sphere. This has become a common habit with the Europeans but is entirely wanting amongst us. (The Peshwa) did not establish Agencies in Foreign countries. Manu's prohibition (not to visit foreign countries) produced such a disastrous consequence. It will be unjust to find fault with the Peshwas in all matters. But it must be confessed that they made some uncondonable mistakes." This is what Mr. Rajwade says about the Peshwas. It is, indeed, a harsh and somewhat inaccurate judgment. The learned historian blames the Peshwas for not being in advance of their times. Every historical personage, however, must be judged according to the social, political and moral standards of his times. Would it be right to expect more from the Peshwas, when the

surrounding circumstances then existing are carefully taken into consideration? Undoubtedly the Peshwas' difficulties are not duly regarded.

Mr. Sardesai entertains the same views on this point as Mr. Rajwade. With all deference to these learned scholars of Maharashtra, I beg to add that the responsibility of this decline of the maritime power of the Marathas does not lie entirely on the Peshwas. The Peshwas may be responsible to some extent, but the entire responsibility must be shared by Shahu and his whole Court. My reasons for this view will be fully grasped by my readers if they take a rapid survey of the Maratha power after the death of the great Shivaji to the times of Shahu Chhatrapati. The difficulties that the Maratha power met with from 1680 to 1714 were such as to deter any man of ordinary courage or capability from aspiring to raise the fabric of the Maratha Empire. Mutual jealousy, want of patriotism, absence of capability and unity of purpose—these defects were to be found in some of the most powerful courtiers of Shahu. The Peshwas had to surmount this evil as well as to avail themselves of the opportunity of establishing the Maratha Power at the Imperial Court. Had the Peshwas failed to attend to their northern India Expeditions, a golden opportunity would have been lost. With an empty treasury, with refractory Sirdars poisoning Shahu's ears, with an ill-paid and irregular army, the Peshwas had taken on their shoulders the duty of establishing the Maratha Power and prestige in India. Alone and often unaided, the Peshwas (Baji Rao and Balaji Baji Rao) had to face obstructions, of which an adequate idea is not quite possible at

this time. Moreover, the attitude of the Angres and especially of Tulaji Angre was so refractory as to necessitate the adoption of some stringent measures. In short, the whole responsibility of this sad disregard of the Maratha fleet must be shared rateably by Shahu, the Peshwas, and the Court of Satara, which was composed of greedy and unpatriotic members, some of whom often put insurmountable barriers upon the path of Maratha progress by suppressing the Peshwa's energy and enthusiasm in a manner, of which the less said the better.

Did the Peshwa usurp the power of the Chhatrapati? Though it has become a fashion with some European writers of Indian History to assert that the Peshwas were "usurpers" of power, we confidently assert on the basis of unimpeachable evidence that the Peshwas did not usurp the power from the Chhatrapati. On the contrary, it may be said most certainly that the Chhatrapati conferred the power on the Peshwa knowing him to be the only capable person fit and ready to cope with such a gigantic task. Elsewhere, evidence is given on this point, showing that the deeds delivered to Balaji by Shahu were genuine beyond any shadow of doubt and that they were voluntarily given to the Peshwa after much discussion and continued consideration of the various pros and cons of the case.*

*Mr. Kincaid writes as follows on this point:—

"The Peshwa has been greatly blamed for having deposed the heir of Shivaji. With what farsighted prudence he profited by the turn of events, will be told in a succeeding volume. But the blame surely rests on the Bhonales themselves. It was the quarrels of Tarabai and Shahu that led to the rise of Balaji Vishwanath. It was the Sedition of

Shahu was ease-loving but not to such an extent as to altogether neglect his duties. At any rate, at the beginning of his career, the Chhatrapati was very industrious and hard-working. Though somewhat indolent, he was ready to rise to the occasion and to be guided by the counsels of wisdom of Balaji Vishwanath, Baji Rao, and Balaji Baji Rao, all of whom sacrificed their lives for raising Shahu's state to the status of an empire and thus fulfilled the illustrious Shivaji's grand aim of "Hindu-pad-Padshahi". It is true that Shahu's regard for the Moghul throne was based on the solemn word which he was obliged to give to the emperor prior to his leaving Delhi, but there was also an element of affection ingrained with that regard which originated from Shahu's grateful sentiments for the Begum Sahiba (the daughter of Aurangzeb) about whose motherly feelings for Shahu we have already made some mention. In short Shahu deserves credit for doing his best to keep his word without any serious opposition to the schemes of Baji Rao. It was indeed an anomalous position and Shahu's strong common sense enabled him to find out a way out of the difficulty. Hence arose the wonder-

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Sambhaji that created the ascendancy of Baji Rao. It was the bickerings of Sagunabai and Sakwarbai, the monstrous ambition and inveterate malice of Tarabai that led to the Sovereignty of Balaji and the fall of the house of Shivaji. To use the well known phrase of Napoleon, the first minister did not take the crown from another's brow. He picked it out of the gutter, where it had fallen. But whosoever the fault the consequences were certain. With the imprisonment of Ramraja the epic of the Bhonsle ended."

—Kincaid's *History of the Maratha people* Vol. II, pp. 316-317.

ful phenomenon of the Marathas ruling the empire by ruling the emperor of Delhi.

The civil Government under the Marathas generally and particularly under Balaji Baji Rao and Madhav Rao I was far more humane than the Moghul rule, as will be evident from the Maratha records and the papers published from the records of the East India Company. The rule of the Peshwa Nanasaheb was characterized by much regard for the poor Rayat. The methods of administering justice during the times of the great Shivaji and those of the Peshwas, were far more humane than those of the Moghul rule.* Even Ibn Batuta, who was judge of Delhi†, records that

*"Neither life nor property was secure under their rule. The Mohomedan conquerors took what they wanted, and exacted whom they would. If a merchant possessed gold or jewels, he was careful to hide his wealth. If an artisan was more than commonly ingenious in his craft, he concealed the extent of his skill. It was dangerous to be rich. It was dangerous to be clever. It was dangerous in any way to be a marked man. If the Sovereign was accessible to his subjects, so was the executioner. Justice was administered with such extraordinary promptitude, that offenders were hurried into the presence of their Maker almost before they knew that they had committed any offence."

—Kaye's *Administration of the East India Co.* p. 41.

†"During the closing years of the Moslem rule, the administration of justice greatly deteriorated. The law courts became the engine and instrument of oppression of innocent people. Even the petty Zamindars set up a court of their own. Authority and power were transferred to the hands of military adventurers who pillaged the rich and the wealthy in order to uphold and maintain their authority. No wonder that the Ayn-i-Akbari and the latest Fatawi-i-Alamgiri of the great Emperor Alamgir or Aurangzib were set at naught.

"in point of barbarity the Mohomedans did not yield to any other nation in the world!" In short, the rule of Balaji Baji Rao, on whom Shahu had thrown the entire burden of the Empire, was, speaking comparatively, far more beneficial to the tillers of the soil particularly and to the Rayat generally than that of the Moghuls. During the rule of the Peshwa, the system of administering justice was also far more merciful than that under the Moghuls,* as the recent researches of scholars unmistakably demonstrate.

We dilate upon this subject in some detail, because there is an attempt occasionally made by prejudiced scholars of the type of Dr. Vincent Smith and others who have even doubted the Maratha Records directly, to do less than justice to the Maratha rule generally and especially to the Peshwas. In conclusion, we have to say that the civil government, including the administration

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They were of little service then. The canons of justice were annulated by adventurers, by bandits and robbers."

—*The Early History and Growth of Calcutta*
by Rajah Binaya Krishna Deb, p. 169.

*"In this connection, it is interesting to note what a Portuguese contemporary of the Sultan, by name Ludovicode Varthena, wrote of him at the time: 'Every day he eats poison. Do not imagine that he fills his stomach with it but he eats a certain quantity, so that when he wishes to destroy any great personage, he makes him come before him, stripped and naked; then from a full month spurts out spittles upon him, whereby in the space of half an hour the man drops dead.'"

—*Bombay in the Making*, by Malabari, p. 277.

of justice, of the Marathas was far more humane and beneficial than that of the Moghuls*

We present the following extract to our readers with regard to the Peshwas services to Shahu's state particularly and to Maharashtra generally:—

"Thus the incapacity of Shahu Maharaj, the selfish ambition of the Maratha chieftains, and the tangled problems of the state called for some men of outstanding ability and these were supplied by the famous Chitpavan family of Bhatta. They rose equal to the occasion and extricated the state out of this great confusion. These were the Peshwas. Endowed with a penetrating mind and with great talents for organisation, bright and fair in that rich beauty of Konkan, brave and

* "The picture is by no means overdrawn. It is similar to the one drawn by us in a previous chapter, while describing the Moslem method of administering justice. For instance, we noticed how Mahmud Begarra used to condemn prisoners to death by merely squirting at them the juice of the betel he was in the habit of chewing constantly—a sentence which was executed almost before the fatal juice had had time to dry. We have also referred to the ghastly entertainment at which the Governor of Ahmedabad had invited the English and Dutch directors to witness the summary execution of eight dancing girls, because they had refused to appear before him. The host was greatly amused we are informed, at the consternation with which his European guests were filled by this cruel massacre."

—*Malbari*. p.277.

"It seems almost superfluous to allude to the cruelty of the earlier Mohomedan rulers at greater length. Their example could not have made the English in Surat or at Bombay more humane in their treatment of criminals. Ibn Batuta says that owing to the tyranny of the Emperor, Delhi, when he entered it, was almost a desert, the greatest city in the world, had the fewest inhabitants."

—*Bombay in the Making*, by Malbari. p. 278.

eloquent, they proved by far the ablest of all the officers of Shahu, and hence rose to hold the helm of the state. In that age of self-centred cupidity, they were the only people every fibre of whose being thrilled with an altruistic ambition of establishing a Hindu sovereignty and to this their ambition they yoked unflinching fervour, tireless energy and a deep-rooted love for work. Indeed at a time when Maharashtra lay exhausted after the twenty-five years of warfare, when it was reeking with partisan blood, torn within and tormented without and when the cry of the country was great for its relief, and for peace and goodwill among the countrymen those who could ensure these, naturally were destined to rule the country. Both the king and the Ashtapradhan council failed to do it and hence the rise of the Peshwas was inevitable. From the diabolical indulgence in the civil war they turned the attention of their people to a land outside, rich and flourishing, to conquer it and to establish their sovereignty over it. That is their great service to the state, to Maharashtra.*

We conclude this narrative by observing that the Peshwa* on whom the Chhatrapati had thrown the whole burden of the State, after thoroughly satisfying himself about the Peshwas' attachment to him and his throne, was at the same time, the most capable person, not only in the Court of

*Vide Professor Sinha's article "Introduction to the Rise of the Peshwa," in *Journal of Indian History*.

*Even Grant Duff writes as follows about Balaji Baji Rao:—

"... But under the Government of Balaji Baji Rao, Panchayats, the ordinary tribunals of civil justice, began to im-

Shahu, but in the whole of India. In short, we have no hesitation in saying that this Peshwa,* generally known as Nanasaheb, fully justified his selection by the Chhatrapati, as well by his glorious work and undoubted ability as by his wise and faithful conduct towards the State and the person of his sovereign, the noble-hearted Shahu† Chhatrapati of Satara.

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prove, because power, if it did not always examine and uphold their decrees, at least did not interfere to prevent the decisions of the community. The Maratha dominion attained its greatest extent under Balaji Rao's administration; and most of the principal Brahmin families can only date their rise from that period. In short, the condition of the whole population was, in his time, improved, and the Maratha peasantry, sensible of the comparative amelioration which they began to enjoy, have ever since blessed the days of Nana Saheb Peshwa."

—*Grant Duff's History*, Vol. II, p. 115

*Mr. Govindrao Sakharam Sirdesai, the historian of the Marathas, describes this Peshwa's career with great force and lucidity in his volume (1740-1761 A. D.) and I feel much tempted to give an extract from that work.

—*Vide Appendix*

†We have already given some stories illustrating various traits in Shahu's noble character. We must not forget the favourite dog of Shahu, named Khandya. This dog once saved the life of the Chhatrapati, who gratefully conferred on it the honours of a big Jagirdar and raised a monument in honour of its memory, which still stands. Mr. Kincaid writes as follows about this matter:—

"A small sculpture at the side still preserves the likeness of the hound. There a marvellous beast prances through the ages—awe-inspiring, fear-compelling, tiger-bearing. Surely no dog save that of Odysseus of Ithica ever had a more enduring memorial."

—*Kincaid's History*, Vol. II, p. 306

CHAPTER X

THE MATERIAL AND SOCIAL CONDITION OF THE MARATHAS PRIOR TO AND DURING THE REIGN OF CHHATRAPATI SHAHU

It may certainly be interesting to know something about the Material and Social condition of Maharashtra particularly and of Hindustan generally during the reign of Chhatrapati Shahu. We therefore take a cursory view of this subject, on which modern historical researches have thrown considerable light.

(a) *Material Condition.*—The material condition of Maharashtra was not satisfactory at the beginning of Shahu's reign. The country was in more or less unsettled state on account of military expeditions and frequent appeals to arms. What was applicable in the case of Maharashtra, was also true about the rest of India.

The burden of taxation was very light, the prices of foodstuffs were very cheap and consequently the cost of living was also very moderate. Raw materials and foodstuffs, wheat, cotton, oilseeds and others were not exported to foreign countries on a large scale but mostly remained in the local markets, thereby conducing to very low prices and very cheap living. With the advent of Balaji Vishwanath in power the condition of Maharashtra and the Maratha peasantry and the people underwent a change for the better. The cultivators of the soil could not certainly become very rich but they were considerably happy and flourishing as Balaji Vishwanath made beneficent revenue regulations and his illustrious son and successors were most

particular that standing crops should never be injured and the peasantry should never be oppressed. As the rulers lived in the land, money remained in the country and the financial condition began to be satisfactory after the year 1714. Grazing lands for cattle, almost free, were reserved on an extensive scale and forest rules were extremely mild, both these causes conducing to a satisfactory and healthy breed of cattle, the joy of the peasantry and the source of successful agricultural pursuits. The rigours of the forest department were conspicuous by their absence.*

Gold and diamond mines were worked satisfactorily in the country and were highly appreciated in the markets of foreign countries. India certainly was far-famed for its Gold and precious stones. The following extract from the writings of Mr. Nathneil Smith, Director of the East India Company, will be very interesting to our readers as it pays a well-deserved tribute to the mildness of the Maratha rule:—"The Marathas are formidable from the situation and the extent of their territories,

*Grant Duff and Elphinstone pay a high tribute to the lenient and merciful regulations which were promulgated by the Peshwa Balaji Vishwanath and his successors, for the good of the peasantry. "But under the Government of Balaji Bajirao, Panchayats, the ordinary tribunals of Civil justice began to improve. The Maratha dominion attained its greatest extent under Balaji Bajirao's administration; and most of the principal Brahmin families can only date their rise from that period. In short, the condition of the whole population, was in his time improved and the Maratha peasantry, sensible of the comparative amelioration which they began to enjoy, have ever since blessed the days of Nana Sahib Peshwa."

—Grant Duff, Vol. 1, page 624.

the mildness of their laws, their inexhaustible resources, their numerous armies and their manner of making war. By the wisdom of their treaties, the force of their arms and the asylum which refractory Rajas and Jamindars have found in their protection, they have stretched their dominion from sea to sea. In proportion as the power of the Moghul Empire decreased that of the Marathas gathered strength. Their annual revenues are estimated at seventeen millions sterling. The inhabitants groan under no enormous taxes. The Government is everywhere lenient and humane. No blood is shed, no outrage committed against the privilege of our common nature."*

This testimony to the benevolent nature of the Maratha rule is endorsed by European historians and reflects remarkable credit on the Maratha King and his Prime Ministers the Peshwas. We stand on the *terra-firma* of tangible evidence when we say that the general material condition of Maharashtra and the Maratha people was on the whole, satisfactory in the latter part of the reign of Chhatrapati Shahu. *Vide Administrative System of the Marathas* by Dr. S. N. Sen, M. A., Ph. D. Dr. Sen's appreciation of the Maratha rule, based as it is on thorough research and evidence, is remarkable in this connection.

* The Moghul tyranny and oppression originated from the Moghul power and the Moghul Court, against which the Marathas directed their attack. Our readers should carefully bear in their minds that the Hindu and Mohamedan populations lived in peace and on amicable terms, as the Hindu and Mohamedan saints of India had produced a peaceful atmosphere and influence on the minds of the Rayat at large. There was no communal animosity as such.

(b) *Social Condition.*—The social condition of Maharashtra in the reign of Chhatrapati Shahu was somewhat of the superstitious type but occasionally it represents incidents of remarkable interest. It is not necessary to allude here in detail to the condition of the various provinces of India during the rule of Aurangzeb,* when the extreme limit of social prostration was reached. The rise of the Maratha power checked the tide of repression and oppression and conduced to as better a state as was possible under the circumstances in those times. It is however noteworthy that the relations between the Hindu and the Mohamedan populations at large, as observed elsewhere in this work, were amicable as several Mohamedan saints had already prepared the path by their Catholic preachings and high ideals. Kabir Sahab, Shaikh Mohammad, and other saints, influenced by the Pandharpur cult, have written much which served to infuse a spirit of unity between the Hindus and the Mohamedans.

The Hindus had begun to assert their rights and privileges in the various provinces, as the central Moghul power had begun to be decayed and the Marathas were making a decided advance towards supremacy as much in social as in political matters. The education of the society in general was rudimentary, but the Military training was a prominent factor in it, as it was paying and leading to rosy chances of advancement.

As regards foreign adventures, the state of society was extremely unsatisfactory. None

* Aurangzeb committed havoc by his orders to convert the Hindus of Kashmir to Islam by force !

Vide The Marathas and the Moghuls by the present writer.

thought of crossing the "Kala Pani". Hence there was scanty knowledge of the outer world. Isolated in this way, the Indians were ignorant of the progress that Europe generally and England particularly had made and were making. Lack of scientific knowledge was the bane of society. Crude ideas about the "untouchables" were generally prevalent, though the Peshwa Baji Rao I was much in advance of his times in being the first to appoint a Mahar to high military position and was thus a solitary exception highly creditable to the Peshwa's regime.

Another remarkable thing that strikes one particularly is the absence of communal riots as such in Shahu's times. Thanks to the preachings of saintly poets, there was an absence of communal disturbances, fatal fights between the Hindu and the Mohamedan population at large, as India is witnessing now. With the rise of the Maratha power, the forced conversions and cow slaughter were, of course, prohibited. During Chhatrapati Shahu's times, we find that not only the Siddhis of Janjira but the emperors of Delhi also warmly received Hindu saints like the famous Shree-Tulsidas, Shri Narayan Dixit, Shri Brahmendra Swami and others and conferred rich Jahagirs on them for the upkeep of their Samsthans. We present to our readers two interesting instances of Maratha gentlemen being retaken into the fold of the Hindu community by the orders of the king Shahu and the Peshwa Baji Rao I. We give the original letters written by the Chhatrapati Shahu and the Peshwa's brother Chimnaji Ballal. Our readers would find from these cases that advanced

and liberal views were not altogether absent in Maharashtra in those days, though orthodoxy and superstition were prevalent to a degree :—

(a) नगर जिन्हामध्यें चांभार गोदे न्हयून एक पदयणा आहे, त्यापैकी कसचे जितो बेशोड चौगुळा पुताचो विन मुघाजी शोधर हा दादळजी सोमवंशी न्हयून जो मराठ्यांवर प्रसिद्ध सरदार होता, त्याच्या सैन्यामध्ये मोक्षर हेता. दादळजी सोमवंशी छानें इ. सन. १०१६ चे कुमारास छुरत प्रांतावर स्वारी केली, त्यावेळीं तो मोगलास हस्तगत झाला. मोगलांनीं त्यास ब्रष्ट करून वरें सदा कर्मे आपल्या नौकरीमध्ये ठेवले. पुढें बाळ्याजी विषनाथ पेराचे हे दिव्हीडून परत आले, त्यावेळीं हा युक्तिचें मोगलांच्या कंफर्लातून पळून येऊन मराठ्यांच्या लष्करांत सामिल झाला, व नंतर आपल्या गांवीं गेला. तेथें आल्यानंतर त्यानें सर्व गोतास, आपणांस मुसलमानांनीं जवरीनें ब्रष्ट केल्याचा वृत्तांत झुत केला. तेन्नां जितो, चांभार गोदे, हिंमणी, हिवे गन्नाप, भेटकळ, आंबोरे, वगैरे ठिकाणच्या मोक्षदमांनीं व समस्त गोतांची मिळून धाडू महाराजांकडे अर्ज केला व झालेला वृत्तांत सांगितला. तेन्नां धाडू महाराजांनीं सर्व हकिकत मनांत आपणूच सर्व ठिकाणच्या मोक्षदमांस व वतनदारांस अशी आज्ञापत्रें पाठविची की 'पुताजी भजकूर याबवर मोगलानें बळात्पर करून ब्रष्ट केले, हे झालीं आपले संतोषे ब्रष्ट झाला नाही या करितां त्यास गोतामध्ये प्यावयाची आज्ञा केली आहे, तरी तुम्ही समस्त भिवोन, धाकाज्मागे धुस करून, गोता मध्यें येजे, आणि पूर्ववत् वर्तून करये' हें आज्ञापत्र स. १४ जिल्हाद इसमे अजरीफ मयः व अलफ तारखेचें असून धाडू महाराजांच्या राजनिशीमध्ये नमूद आहे.

—इतिहास संमत, पारसनीस.

(b) अजम देसमुख व देशपांचे ताळके खारापट्टण यांची विमणाजी बहाळमुख

सन बीत सल्लाखिन मया अलफ-रायाजी सिद्दा बाणकोटी होता तो शामलास सीपुंनल्यावर शामलांनें जुळमानें बाटविला. याकरितां क्षेत्र मिसाई कर येथें पाठविला. तेथे भीसखिच प्रादक्षित देऊन गोतांत पूर्ववत् वर्तावे असा नियम करून पत्र दिव्हे. आप्रमाणें गोतपत झाली पाहिजे. याकरितां तुम्हास पत्र सादर केले आहे. तरी गोतांस सांगोन त्याची मोतपत करऊन आपले जातींत

पूर्ववत् वर्तणे करये आणिजे स. १० जिल्हेज.

भीराम आ
राजा धाडू नरपती हयें
निधान बाजीराव बहाळ
मुख प्रधान.

Translation—"To the Deshmukh and Deshapande, Taluka Kharapatan. After compliments from Chimnaji Ballal (younger brother of the Peshwa Baji Rao.)

One Ramaji Sindhia, living in Banakot, was forcibly converted to Islam by the Shamla (Habsi). Ramaji was sent to the holy place of Bhimashankar, where the Shankaracharya readmitted Ramaji into the Hindu community after the Prayaschita (purification ceremony) and issued a letter to that effect. Accordingly Ramaji must be admitted into his caste as before (without any loss of social status) after relating the matter to his caste fellows."*

The general spirit of the Hindu society, emerging out of the oppression of the Moghul yoke, was bracing and in Maharashtra it was full of that buoyancy which is characteristic of a young rising nation. Poets and Bards depict those times in encouraging and eulogistic terms and the tide of religious revival had given a very attractive tone to the Hindu community generally and especially to Maharashtra, though somewhat immersed in superstition and ignorant of the progress and strength of Foreign Countries and thereby lacking in a proper knowledge of political aspira-

* After Farrukseer's death, Indra Kumari was (after a purification ceremony) duly re-converted to Hinduism and taken to Jodhpur by her father. The Hindus in all parts of India had bravely resolved that their community should not suffer by the onslaughts of Islamic conversions. The Rajputs began to defy openly the Moghul power and the emperor of Delhi. The Moghul Court had to prohibit cow-slaughter at no distant date.

tions and national solidarity of those nations, outside of India, which were trying to obtain a footing in Hindustan by means of their superior education, national spirit, diplomacy, military skill, naval strength and spirit of adventure.

Our readers will be much amused and interested by a perusal of the following letter which was issued to the Kamavisdar of Indore after the division of the Malwa province by the Peshwa Baji Rao amongst his Sirdars Sindhia, Holkar and Pawar. It is remarkable that a Fakir named Muradshah was performing the worship of a Hindu Deity—the Khedapati Maruti in Juna Indore. After the Maratha rule was introduced into Malwa, the Fakir Muradshah was given land to compensate for his prevention from continuing in the Puja. The tolerant and just spirit of the Hindu rule may be inferred from this instance. The worship of the Khedapati Maruti was entrusted to Mahant Bairagi Rupdas Baba, a worthy saint and a great devotee of Shrikrishna Bhagawan:—

राजेत्री कामाविसदार वर्तमान जावी प्रो. शाके १६६२ इसवी सन १७४०
इंदुर ————— गोसामी बांस.

(c) अक्षेहितलक्ष्मी आलंकृत राजमान्य.....स्वेहांकित मल्हारजी होळकर इंडवत मु। सन इहिदे अरबेन मया अक्कळ. शाके १६६२ श्री माळती खेदा-पती कसब्यातील जावी पुज्या अविघराज्य म्हणोन मुरादशा फकीर करीत होता. आलीकडे हिंदुराज्य जाहत्यावरून परगणे मजकुरचे मामलेदार व जमीनदार वगैरे यांनी जाहीर केलें; आपले दैवताची पुज्या अविघ करितो हे आपले राज्यास चांगळे नाही. त्याजवरून सर्वांचे अनुमते फकीरास राजी करून या निमित्त तीद विषेवादा देऊन पुज्या बंद करून सरकारातून पुजा कुणमक महंत बैरागी रुपदास बाबा सांगदास निमानीदि निखाणी स्थापन

पुढून बाळकडे सांगोन हे वनद तुम्हांस सादर केली वसे तरी बाबा यांचे
 विषयपरंपरा श्रीजीचे पुजेचे काम याचे हाते घेत जाऊन पुन्हा पन्नाचा हर-
 एक निशी व्याखेप न वेढा याची नकळ लिहून घेऊन असल पत्र महुंत
 बाबास भोगवटिवास परतोन देवें जाणिजे छः ७ रमजान बहुत काय लिहिणें.



श्री भाळसमस्तचरणीं तत्पर
 खंडोजी भुत मन्दापराष होळकर.

खालसी नारिट्यक फाईल नं ३५ ता. १५-९-१४ ई. ॥

APPENDIX I.

"The King of Persia, finding himself in possession of Delhi, called the Nizam and Sadit into his presence, and addressed them in the following extraordinary manner: 'Are not you both most ungrateful villains to your king and country; who, after possessing such wealth and dignity, called me from my own dominions, to ruin them and yourselves? But I will scourge you all with my wrath which is the instrument of the vengeance of God.' Having spoken these words, he spit upon their beards, the highest affront possible to Musalmans and turned them, with every mark of indignity from his presence.

After the traitors were thrust out into the court of the palace, the Nizam addressed himself to Sadit and swore, by the Holy Prophet, that he would not survive this indignity. Sadit applauded his resolution, and swore he would swallow poison upon his return home; the Nizam did the same; and both, determined in appearance upon death, returned to their respective houses.

Sadit, in the meantime, sent a trusty spy to bring him intelligence when the Nizam should take draught. The Nizam, being come home, appeared in the deepest affliction, but having privately intimated his plot to a servant, he ordered him to bring him the poison. The servant acted his part well. He brought him an innocent draught, with great reluctance. The Nizam, after some hesitation, and having formally said his prayers, drank it off in the presence of Sadit's spy, and

soon after pretended to fall down dead. The spy hastened back to his Master, and told him that the Nizam had just expired. Sadit, ashamed of being outdone in a point of honour by his fellow iniquity, swallowed a draught of real poison, and became the just instrument of punishment to his own villainy. The Nizam was not ashamed to live, though none had greater reason. He even prided in that wicked trick, by which he had rid himself of his rival, and afterwards actually enjoyed the intended fruits of all his villainies."

—*The History of Hindustan*, (1812), Vol. II.,
pp. 295, 296, by Alexander Dow.

APPENDIX II

What Shahu was right in entrusting the administration of his Raj to Balaji Baji Rao is now made clear as day-light by the researches of scholars like Sane, Rajwade, Kincaid, Parasnis and others, though it was a fashion in the latter part of the last Century to belittle the worth and work of the Peshwas. Some writers were so audacious as to call the Peshwas as 'Usurpers'! In this connection the following extract may be interesting:—

नानासाहेब पेशव्याची पुण्यास्थिती.

श्रीपंत बाळाजी राजीराव ऊर्फ नानासाहेब पेशवे यांची पुण्यास्थिती मंगळार ता. १७ रोजी भारतवर्षासर्वांक मंडळाच्या दतीने ५८. इतिहास संशोधक मंडळांत साजरी करण्यांत आली. प्रथम अजय्य श. वा. कु. भादे यांनी प्रास्ताविक खाण करून त्यांत नानासाहेबावर स्वराज्य चालविण्यास आर शाहु महाराजांनी टाकल्यामुळे त्यांची परिस्थिति कशी विकट झाली होती, तथापि तिच्याशी टक्कर देऊन मराठी सम्राज्य वैभवाच्या उच्च किंबदंत्यावर नेऊन पोचविण्यांत त्यांची पुस्तकालिखी व शोधपण कसे हिमालय आले याचे विवेचन केले. नंतर सौ. इंदिराबाई देवदर यांनी आपण केले. त्यांनी घड्याच्या पारतंत्र्याच्या स्थितींत आपल्या पूर्वजांच्या कर्तव्याची ते स्मरण करून त्यापासून स्फूर्ति मिळविणे हा एक मार्ग असल्याने त्या दृष्टीने प्रस्तुत उत्सवाचे महत्त्व दर्शिले. रा. देशमुख वकील यांनी नानासाहेबावर रा. शेजवलकर यांनी वेतलेल्या आक्षेपांस वज्रतुल्यपूर्ण भाषेने उत्तर दिले. श्रीमती बंशुवार्धे आपराकर यांनी बुद्धीबल या पुस्तकाच्या आधारे नानासाहेबांच्या काळजी स्थिति समजावून दिली. वे. महाशिव साळी मिळे यांनी नानासाहेबांच्या हाता-खाली शूर पुरुष लढण्यास असल्याकारणाने त्यांस लढाईवर लाव्याचे कसे विशेष कारण पडले नाही हे दाखविले. प्रो. हत्तोपंत पोतदार यांनी नानासाहेबांनी कर्नाटकातून नाना पुरवरे यांस लिहिलेले पत्र वाचून दाखवून नानासाहेब कसे चतुर व चाके उन्नत होते हे स्पष्ट केले. सदर पत्रांत

‘उत्तरेकद्वय द दक्षिणेकद्वय वने सुभगं नद्या एण्याकळे यावयास शिधतात. भण त्या वाटेनें येतांना दक्षच्या मध्येच विरतात व त्यामुळे आपण सावकासाच्या कृपांतून मुक्त होत नाही, जसे अलंकारिक रीतीने लिहिले होते. त्यांनी नानासाहेबांचे एक विससजीव विग्रह हवास दाडविले. व शेवटी लकडी-जुळपाशी नानासाहेबांचे वृंदावन असून त्यांची चांगली व्यवस्था राहण्याची दखलीब करावी असें जुणेकरांस मुजविले. त्याबरोबर सदर कृत्यांसाठीं मुभादे चाळीस रुपयेपर्यंत जागच्या नाणीं आंकडे पडले. अखेर अम्यक्षेत्रीं समारोप ऐक्यावर अजेरे कार्य होपले.

We request our readers to go through the admirable work entitled *Rise of the Peshwas* from the pen of Professor Sinha of Nagpur, in order to fully appreciate the worth of the Peshwas.

APPENDIX III

The following letter from Sambhaji Angre to Baji Rao Peshwa is worthy of notice. Had he been as good as his word, the naval power of the Marathas would not have suffered so much :—

रजशी बाजीराज पंडित प्रधान बाजोगोसावी यांस सकल पुण्यकरुण अलं-
 डित लक्ष्मी अलंकृत राजप्रान्य स्नेहांकित संभाजी क्षीमे सरखेल राम राम
 विनंती, वरी वैशीख कुशल आपणेन स्वकीय केहन केले ज्यहिजे. विशेष,
 आपण उत्तर प्रांतांहून स्वारीहून आले, हे श्रवण होऊन संतोष जाहला. सर्वदा
 पत्र पाठवून परामर्ष करावा हे बढिळपणास उचित आहे. बरकड बढिळांचा
 भाळपणा अकृत्रिमतेने चालोन गेला. त्यामागे तीर्थस्थ राजेश्री सेखोजी
 बाबाबा व आपला भाळपणा विशेषच चालिला होता. परंतु धीने त्यास दिवस
 चोढके केले. त्यामागे आपण भाळ उभयती, तिसरा आपला बंधू, ऐसाच
 बढिळोपार्जित स्नेह जालावा; त्यास कालवशेकरून आम्हापासून अंतरापा
 जाहला किंवा आपणाकडून जाहला, किंसेक संकरण विकल्प बाडोन गेले,
 त्यांचे परिमार्जन होऊन पूर्ववत्प्रमाणे भाळपणा चालोन एक विचारें बतीवें
 भाळ करितां आपण शपथपूर्वक उद्गें पाठविली कीं, एत वेळ आपली कामची
 भेट व्हावी. मेट जाह्यात्मावर जे जे किल्ले उभयपक्षां बाबळे आहेत ते धु
 होऊन, चित्तास चित मेळवून, दोनीं मनसबे एकच ऐसें जखून, भाळपणा
 शिबरे दिवस बढिळांपासून चालिल्ल याप्रमाणें, किंबहुना अधिकोत्तर चालावा
 ऐसाच हेत चित्ताचा होता. त्यास आपली स्वारी उत्तरेत जाहली तेन्नां तो
 योग एकीछे राहिल. अलिछे राजश्री विपाजी पंडीत यांची स्वारी कुलाबा
 प्रांती शिबी राव याजबरी जाहली. त्यांत धीकूपेनें बतीजा देऊन जाणारे
 फिरले. तेन्नां आप्पानीं एक कारकून पाठविला आणि भाळपणाच्या
 समतेच्या किंसेक गोष्टी सांगोन पाठविल्या. त्यावरून आम्ही आप्पास
 प्रत्योत्तरें देवून राजेश्री जारो काशी यांस पाठविलें. त्यांचे समारंभे
 रा. चितो कृष्ण यांस आप्पानीं पाठविलें. देलवाकर पाठविली. स्वावरून
 संतोष होऊन संधावान जाहले. त्याप्रमाणें आम्ही बेळगाकर पाठविली. ऐसास
 आजीपणें नाजप्रकारें पारुमेळी चालून आपल्या व आमच्या चित्तास विप-

यांस घातला होता तो दूर होऊन, आपण उमवतां बंधू तैसे तिथरा ऐसें आम्हांस लखून, कोकण प्रांतीं गडकोट आपले, वर पाटी मनसबा आमचा, ऐसी एक बात करून माऊणें वालावें. सर्व संपदा आहे हे आपली आहे. या उपरी आम्ही दुसरा विचार वित्तास आणित नाही. मुख्य गोष्ट आपली आमची एकत्रेक त्रिवर्गांची मट दसरामानी व्हावी. भेटीनंतर सर्व मनोरम पूर्ण होतील. जे आम्हांस संकट तें आपण दूर करावें. आपणास अयस्य तें आम्ही करावें. तेथें दुसरा विचार असेल तरी श्री कानोबाची व खासे यांच्या पावांची शपथ आहे. रंगाच्या जोटा बांधवें नाही. राव, आपण आम्हांस जैसें सेखोजी बाबा तैसे आपण आम्ही रागावलों तरी क्षमा करावी. दुसऱ्यांचें न ऐकावें. सेखो शबास आम्ही रागेजोन नानाप्रकारें बोलत' होतो, की नव्हती आपणांस विदित आहे. वढोलपण जेथें आहे त्याणी चारतुटीच्या गोष्टी घेऊन माऊण्याचे जातीनें चालवावें ऐसें धीनें सामर्थ्य दिलें आहे. परिहार कोठ-पावेतो लिहावा जसें आपण तैसे आम्हांस लखून वित्ताची सोज्जलता करून वित्तापासून भेटिचा योग कोणे कोणे महिन्यांत होईल वे विषयींचा सिद्धांत करून घेऊन पाठवावा. सुवर्णदुर्गा अथ रमाळ्यास दोन्ही स्थळे आहेत, यांत जेथें आपले विचारास येईल तेथें होईल. राजश्री आप्णानीं वित्ताबद्दल गोष्टी धरली आहे ती सांगतील. शाप्रमाणें ममतापूर्वक उत्तर पाठवावें. लक्ष पत्राचे जागा हें पत्र मानून वित्तातील किलिष दूर करून भेटी घावी. आम्ही आपले वित्तापासून घेऊन पाठविलें आहे. आपल्या खेरोज दुसरा विचार नाही. या उपरी धडीलपणास येईल तें करावें. आपण आम्हांस बरीच आहेत बुद्धिवाद वरचेवरी आम्हा करीत जावी जसा पांडवांचा अभिमान श्रीकृष्णानें घरून कौरवांस नतीचा घेऊन हस्तनापुरी त्यापना केली, याप्रमाणें आपल्यांस करावें लागेल. आपण जे गोष्टी सांगितली ती आम्हांस प्रमाण आहे. राजश्री रघुनाथजी आपणाजवळ जाऊन राहिले आहेत. त्यास अपेक्षी आहे. खाशा-जवळ होते त्यास खाशास व नारोपतांस मूठ मारून दिवंगत केले त्यामागे रा. सेखोजी बाबास तोंच मल केली. असा अपेक्षी आहे. त्यास आपण ठेवावें हे आमचे विचारास येत नाही वर्षा दोन वर्षांनीं आपणांस अनुभव येईल. आमचा चाकर आम्ही मारिळा कुटीछा तरी बाकर, ज्याणी आपल्या बाइकोस सत्क पाळन गेला तो आपणांस कामास काय येईल ! बाइका टाकून जावे की काय ! आपण बोर आहेत. हा अर्थ आपल्या प्यानात घेऊन गेलाच असेल. आपल्या

कार्यास पुरुष लोक जो येईल तो मतळवा करितां हातीं घ्यावा. परंतु आपणा नाकर आपण न ठेवावा. आमचा आम्हाकडे पाठवावा. जे गीष्ट आपले विचारस येणार नाही परंतु लिहिजे आहे. याउपरी ज्याणी ज्याणी कसना बाळविस्वा आहेत, त्या दूर करून भेटीचा लस दिला पाहिजे. समसतांचे जोडी खेरीज आम्हांस दुसरी जोडी विशेष आहे ऐसें नाही. मनोमय साक्ष आहे. उत्तराचा मार्ग लक्षितो. जाणिले. रवाना छ. १२ माहे रविका व ११-७-१७३६ बहुत्र करय लिहिणे. कृपा असे दिती पाहिजे. हे विनंती.

APPENDIX IV

Our readers will find much of interest in an important letter, dated the 5th April 1737, written by Baji Rao to his younger brother Chimnaji Appa in connection with the false reports of the Vazeer Sadat Khan and Delhi Court affairs. We give below the translation of this letter from Mr. Kincaid's *Maratha History*, Volume Second.

CAMP SAWAI JAYANAGAR (Jaipur),

5th April 1737,.

8th of the dark half of Vaishakh
moon 15th Jilhej.

To Appa—After compliments. You must have already learnt from our letters sent with Kasis (special couriers) in which I have given in detail the news of our having left in Bundelkhand all our followers in charge of Prince Jagatraj and of the action with Sadatkhan. Sadatkhan crossed the Jamna and arrived at Agra. If we were to meet him there we were not sure of defeating him owing to his advantageous position then. If we were to wait at the confluence of the Jamna and the Gambhir, that place was also unsafe owing to landslips and erosions. Besides Khan Duran and Mohamed Khan Bangash were on their way to Agra from Delhi and in case they and Sadat Khan happened to join, it would have been a serious affair. So it was not thought proper to encamp at the confluence. Further Sadatkhan wrote to the Emperor and his courtiers that he had routed the Maratha army that had crossed the Jamna, killing two thousand cavalry and drowning two thousand in the river;

that Malharji Holkar and Vithoba Bule had fallen in the actions. Such had been the result of Bajirao's invasion! He further vauntingly wrote that he would cross the Jamna and defeat the Marathas and drive them away beyond the Chambal. The emperor expressed great satisfaction at this and sent to Sadat Khan a dress of honour, a pearl necklace, an elephant and an aigrette. Clothes of honour were also presented to Sadat Khan's Agent at the Delhi Court. Thus Sadat Khan strengthened his and his party's influence with the emperor. He also wrote to several nobles in contemptuous terms about Marathas. Dhondo Govind (Peshwa's Agent at Delhi) kept us informed of all these particulars from time to time. In short, Sadat Khan tried to impress the Moghul court that the Maratha army had neither spirit nor energy and that he had completely defeated it. You are already aware how things pass in Moghul politics. *No action and high talk is their motto.* The emperor fully believes all this but he must now be disillusioned. This could be done in two ways—either to inflict a crushing defeat on Sadat Khan or to march on Delhi and to set fire to the capital, and thus disprove Sadat Khan's boastful statements. We accordingly decided to march against Delhi as Sadat Khan would not leave Agra, and setting fire to the capital and bring to the notice of the emperor the existence of the Marathas! With this determination we started for Delhi on the 25th Jilka' (18th March 1737). Leaving aside the imperial route we followed hilly tract along the Newati' frontier through the territory of Daman Sing, Chudaman Jat. Dhondopant, our Wakil was with Khan Dauran. Sadat Khan sent a word to Khan Dauran:—"I have defeated

Bajirao's army. His followers have fled away and Bajirao himself has crossed the Chambal. Now why do you flatter him and with what object? Why should you entertain his Vakil at your court? He must be now dismissed." Dhondopant was accordingly sent away. He then came to us. Kamruddin Khan, Azmulla Khan and others encountered us, but we did not meet them. Leaving them 14 miles off to our right, we arrived at Delhi on the 7th Jilhej (28th March) after forced marches of 40 miles each. We pitched our camp near Kushbandi (a suburb of Delhi) leaving Barapula and Kalika temple to our right. We wanted to burn the capital to ashes but on second thought we saw no good in destroying the mighty city and ruining the imperial throne at Delhi. Moreover the emperor and Khan Dauran desired to make peace with us but the Moghuls would not agree to it. An act of outrage however breaks the thread of politics. We, therefore, gave up the idea of burning the capital and sent letters to the emperor and Raja Bakhatmal. Two elephants, some horses and camels coming out from the city were however captured by our advanced guard. Some of our soldiers had a scuffle with the people from Delhi who had gone out to attend the Bhawani fair. Next day, Wednesday, 30th March Raja Bakhatmal sent a reply under the commands of the emperor, asking us to send Dhondopant to the imperial court. We did not however despatch him as there was a great commotion in Delhi owing to our presence near the capital; but we sent a word in reply. "We are sending Dhondopant, please send a strong guard under a reliable officer to escort him. We are marching on to the Zil Tank as our presence near

the city is likely to disturb its peace." And we moved on. As we were passing the capital a force consisting of 7 to 8 thousand men was sent by the emperor under Nawab Mir Hassan Khan Koka, Commander of the Khas Chowki, Nawab Amir Khan, Khoja Roz Afzul Khan, Raja Shivsingh Jamadar, Commander of the cavalry, Muzzfurkhan, Deputy-General, Nawab Muzfur Khan, brother of Khan Dauran, who met us near Rikabgunj outside the city. Satwaji Jadhav who commanded the advance guard met the Moghul forces and a fight took place between them. On hearing this we sent force to help him under Mulharji Holkar, Ranoji Shinde, Tukoji Pawar, Jiwaji Pawar, Yeshwantrao Pawar, Manaji Payagude and Govind Hari. They gallantly fought with the Moghuls and completely defeated them. Raja Shivsingh and ten other noblemen were killed; Nawab Mir Hasan Koka was wounded and about three hundred soldiers from the emperor's army were killed and four hundred wounded. Roz Afzur Khan, Amir Khan, Muzfur Khan fled to the capital. We captured two thousand horses though five or six thousand fled away. Indroji Kadam from Ranoji Shinde's cavalry received a bullet wound by which two of his fingers were cut off. No other person of note on our side was killed but some men and horses were wounded. We then encamped at the Zil Tank. About two hours before sunset news came that Kamruddin Khan had arrived from Padeshahpur. We at once started to meet him. A fight took place. Yeshwantrao Pawar captured an elephant that was within a gunshot from the Moghul artillery. A number of horses and camels came

to our camp when it was sunset. We wanted to besiege the Moghul army from all sides and give them a crushing defeat next day. But we could not do so as there were several difficulties in our way, the Zil Tank was about 32 miles off from us, Kamruddin Khan was to our right and in our front was the capital. Besides this, the news of our march on Delhi reached Nawab Khan Dauran, Sadat Khan and Mahomed Khan Bangash on Tuesday the 7th of Zilhej (20th March) at Radhakund. They left behind their heavy baggage and immediately proceeded to Bodel about 64 miles distant with an army of about twenty-five to thirty thousand strong. Next day they halted on the rivulet of Alawardi about 50 miles off. On Thursday morning Khan Dauran, Sadat Khan and Bangash were to join Kamruddin Khan. The situation then would have been perilous as the capital was near. We, therefore, left the Moghuls and halted at a distance of 8 miles. On our side Firangoji Patankar was killed by a bullet. A few men and some horses were also wounded. The Moghul casualties amounted to from 5 to 10. On Thursday Sadat Khan, Khan Dauran, and Bangash joined Kamruddin Khan. Their camps were spread from Alawardi to the Zil Tank. We designed to draw the Moghuls on us and then to fall back and defeat them. With this object we broke the camp and moved on *via* Revad, Kotputali, and Manoharpur. The news has come that the Moghuls have not as yet left their camps between Alawardi and Zil Tank and that Mir Hasan Khan Koka who was wounded in the first action has died. Khan Dauran wrote letters after letters to Sawai Jaisingh to send reinforce-

ment. He has accordingly started with a force of fifteen to sixteen thousand men and artillery and has arrived at Bzsava. He intends visiting Khan Dauran. Sawaiji has also sent us friendly letters, requesting us to leave his territory undisturbed. Our agent, Venkaji Ram, is in his camp. He writes these letters to us. We do not disturb his territory, as we expect to get supplies of grain and fodder from Sawaiji on our way. Abhayasing is at Jodhpur. Now we are going to collect our dues from the Gwalior and Bhadaver Provinces. If the Moghuls still pursue us we shall harass them and reduce them by driving them by force from place to place and utterly crush them by the grace of our king (Raja Shahu) and the blessings of our ancestors. Be not anxious on our account. The Chief thing to be noted is that the emperor and Khan Dauran wish to make peace with us while the Moghuls are striving to defeat us and Sadat Khan is at their head. If by the favour of God his vanity is subdued, everything will be to our satisfaction. If the terms of peace are favourable we shall accept them. Otherwise we shall not conclude any peace. We have annexed the territory about Delhi. The territory about Sonpat and Panpat beyond the Jamna still remains with the Moghuls. We shall plunder and capture it soon and see that the Moghuls will be starved. We shall write to you later on what happens here. If perchance the Moghuls remain in possession of Delhi we shall go to Agra and enter into Antarved (districts between Ganges and Jamna) and ravage the whole territory. If Nizam-ul-Mulk rises and crosses the Narbada, fall upon his rear and harass him as previously advised. On this side none is to be

afraid of. Let there be none whom we need fear.
It will be better if the Nizam is held in check. I
close this with my blessings to you, Continue to
love me as ever.

—*Parasnis' collection.*

APPENDIX V.

The following Extract from Mr. Sardesai's *Riyasat* is very interesting and throws much light on the worth and work of Balaji Baji Rao who succeeded to the Peshwaship:—

“...नानासाहेबासारख्या तत्काच्या हातांत राज्यसूत्रें देण्यांत शाहूने चांगलीच योजकता दाखविली, असे म्हणावें जागते. राज्यकारभार जगावर घेऊन तो सुरळीतपणें चालविण्यास तत्कालीन मंडळींत दुसरा इसम सितका लायक नव्हता, हें परिणामावरूनही सहज दिसून येतें. बारामतीकर बानूजी नायकांत नानासाहेबाची कर्तबगारी, निःसंशय नव्हती. प्रतिनिधीना तर आपले स्वतःचे व्यवहार सुद्धा सांभाळण्याची ताकद नव्हती. रघूजी भोंसले किंवा इतर सरदार व्यक्तिः कितीही धूर व कर्तृत्ववान असले तरी पेशवेगिरीचें काम अंगबर घेण्यास ते स्वतःच आपणांस लायक समजत नव्हते. नाहीतर बानूजी नायकास पेशवेगिरी देष्काऐवजीं ती आपणांसच द्यावी अशी मागणी रघूजीनें केली असती. शिवाय बयोबुद्धत्वांत कितीही अज्ञाणपण असलें तरी राज्यकारभारातील अनेक प्रसंगांत तडकाफडकीनें कामें करण्याचें सामर्थ्य तारण्यांतच असतें. जगाच्या इतिहासांत ज्यांनीं म्हणून विशेष कर्तृत्वं दाखविलें आहे, तें बहुधा तरुणच होते; आणि अशा तरुण पुरुषाच्या हातांत शाहूनें राज्यकारभाराचीं सूत्रें दिलीं, म्हणूनच मराठशाहीचे आयुष्य पन्नास पाऊणशें वर्षे तरी वाढलें. नाहीतर १७५७ तील झाचीबरोबर मराठशाहीचीही पानीपतच्या पूर्वीच झाली असती. इंग्रजांचे तत्कालीन छेद वाचके आणि त्यांचे काचे मनांत आणिले, म्हणजे मद्रास किंवा बंगालप्रमाणें १७५७ च्याच सुमारास सातान्यासही इंग्रज शाही झाली नाहीं, याचें भेय मुख्य राज्य-चालकांसच दिलें पाहिजे. महाराष्ट्रांत दुसरी कोणती व्यक्ति त्या वेळीं जास्त कर्तृत्ववान होती, हें पेशव्यांच्या आक्षेपकांनीच दाखविलें पाहिजे.”

—*Sardesai's Riyasat* Part 1746-1761.

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ERRATA

Page	Line	For	Read
25	9	early	earthly
30	3	as	of
44	8	possibly	probably
64	32	brothers	brother
66	17	unbridled	unbridled
68	1	abandoned	abandoned
115	21	expedation	expedition
119	18	he had	had he
121	6	may	May
124	5	co-operation	cooperation
128	13	excute	execute

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